

26 FEBRUARY 2021

FRIDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2021

The Speaker took the Chair at 9:12am.

Prayer.

MR SPEAKER: I announce the resumption of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

Respectfully I would like to take this opportunity to greet and acknowledge the Hon Prime Minister and the Cabinet of the selected members of Parliament. Greetings to you in good health and spirit.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

The Clerk read out the Order in the Presentation of Papers pursuant to S.O.49 (2).

1. S.R.2021/6, Alcohol Control Act 2020 – Notice of Commencement.
2. S.R.2021/7, Notice of Amendments to the National Building Code of Samoa 2017 and Notice of Commencement.

**SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2020/2021
– debate over the second reading – Day 27**

MR SPEAKER: During the adjournment of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly last night, the Hon Minister of Health was speaking.

Respectfully I call upon the Leader of the Government for your Ministerial Statement.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT BY THE HON PRIME MINISTER
Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti
Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi**

Susuga Hon TUILAEPA AUELUA FATIALOFA LUPESOLIAI LOLOFIETELE NEIOTI AIONO GALUMALEMANA Dr. SAILELE MALIELEGAOI (Prime Minister): Honorable Speaker, I take this opportunity to extend warm greetings to the dignity of Parliament.

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And the presence of your honorable Mr Speaker and the respected members of the Legislative Assembly.

I further acknowledge the revered support of Samoa. Firstly, the dignities of the Government, the guarding supplications of His Highness the Head of State, the Member of the Council of Deputies, the Judicial Arm of Government, the honorific salutations of Samoa, *Aiga ma latou Tama, Usoga a Tumua ma Puleono* and the appeals of religious leaders.

Mr Speaker, as the Leader of the House it is my duty that I make a statement. Our Sitting is about to conclude, so after the Ministers' statements we will have the consideration of the Supplementary Budget, followed by the discussions of the Bills and then we can adjourn. After that, we will have the official ceremony for the dissolution of Parliament with the presence of His Highness Le Ao o le Malo who is prepared to make a brief appreciation address before the members can return to their respective constituencies to prepare for the upcoming General Elections. The Cabinet has also agreed to read out the milestones achieved for this Parliamentary term so as to reflect good governance and transparency. Apologies if the Ministers have spoken too broadly on topics, despite, there is nothing wrong with asking for clarification. If you recall, I did advise the Minister to speak directly of the Ministry's responsibilities. Mr Speaker, I also gave a reminder to the remaining Ministers last night to ensure that 99% of their discussions were works they were engaged in for the awareness of the general public. There is nothing wrong with being clarified as the country needs to be made aware. The normal words said in this House, do not mince words during debate and discussions.

Mr Speaker, I convey apologies. If at times there are heated debates within this House, such is the norm of proceedings in this House. Mr Speaker, I commend you for your patience as there is only you to the majority of us. During my time as former Speaker, this is nothing compared to past Parliaments I used to manage.

This is my 9th consecutive term in Parliament right from when the terms were 3 years until 1991 and now it is 5 years. Should the constituency of Lepa agree to return me to Parliament without any election, I would like to salute their foresight, Fatialofa, Auelua, Tama Punefu o Tulaniu o Atua, Malielegaoi and his wife and Salefao. Because if I had succeeded 9 Parliamentary terms, then it is possible for me to say that I do hold adequate knowledge of our Parliamentary proceedings based on past experiences acquired. Certainly, words do not mince. As this is our normal custom. When it comes to food distribution, the village is always noisy. One would call out to remind the names of so and so that everyone gets a share of the food.

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But when it comes to sharing a pig, they would just cut out the shares and throw, pardon the language. And when a pork portion is thrown and falls to the ground, they would just pick it up, clean it and use it. I speak of our own custom and traditions. Mr Speaker, when it comes time for food distribution, we say excuse me. Open your eyes whilst food is being shared. Thus, the commotion would continue on in case a person does not get a share of the food.

This is similar custom carried out in here and the raising concerns of members bearing in mind our customs and traditions. Such is the saying referred to Faleata, *e ui lava ina tetele pesega ae matua lava ile oo*. Such is our customary values. So with regards to the uninitiated observers, such is the normal practice of the House.

When I first entered Parliament and mingled with the senior members, the words they used were quite unbearable in comparison to the words we use today. One of the statements by one of the members, “This member from Lepa, take your numbers and feed it to the chiefs of your constituency.” You see the viciousness of these words used? Regardless the senior members were used to it. Then another old man said, “You member from Lepa, pardon me, don’t you dare shout your mouth at me.” The words were harsh. What was my response? I also stood up and replied, “Very well, I will do your will, but do not be like that to me.” I too had to say a few words. Mr Speaker, this was the norm inside our Parliament. Such is the reason I wish to appease the honorable Speaker, or the Deputy Speaker who will respond at a later time.

As there is a lot of talents and skills found within this House. Also different personalities. Some are full of eagerness in a way to bring about a contribution. An input so as to develop Samoa. Why? Because it is a House where exchanged are made. What words? The House of Samoa is built together, *e fautele le fale a Samoa*. Mr Speaker that is our nature as matais (chiefs). When we come inside this House, there is more keenness in us, and we would even use direct words so that a topic is clearly clarified.

Mr Speaker, as stated earlier, there are various talents, and vast understanding even farsightedness about our culture. What does this indicate? It is cultural foresight created from within the village. I can also say that these people are scientists of our Government. Because a stable government requires individuals who are masters of peacekeeping to be at the helm. It can be said that these men are experts of the Science of Politics of which some have attained PhDs, Doctor of Philosophy of Politics. However, for those who have not gone overseas but have become professors of philosophy of politics which extends to securing behavior, governing and keeping peace by ensuring that our people adhere to the laws and order. I have said it before, the village council are also police, before the European arrival, this council of Samoa’s Parliament was tasked with policing and passing down judgement Parliament.

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The role of Parliament is to create and pass Laws. What for? The Law is then passed to the Judiciary for their role to interpret the law. Who then implements it? It is implemented by the Executive. Approved, Interpretation, Implementation. Such was Samoa's Administration before the arrival of the Europeans. Laws were passed by the Council of Chiefs.

The interpretation of Standing Orders of the council of chiefs. Such is the Government of Samoa honorable Speaker where all 3 Pillars are present in the House consisting of the house of chiefs. Hence, the sentiments if you want to learn, go to the village council. Such knowledge exists here in the Chamber. Some of us here have also gone abroad to attain qualifications such as an engineer, lawyers, auditors, doctors. So whenever we have our Parliamentary debates and if a member hears a matter that must be corrected, they rise to correct it. Why? Because that is their expertise and knowledge. How many times has Tuitama stood up? How many times has the member for Faleata who is also a doctor stood up when it comes to health-related issues? There are also lawyers here. Whenever matters pertaining to their profession is raised, they stand up. Why? Because they hold that particular profession. In the words of the Bible, "An individual who knows what must be done and refrains from it is a sin in the eyes of God".

Such is reason it is difficult for you to manage our debates sometimes. However, there is only one way to manage it, it is only when Political Parties come in unity through the degree of mutual respect. That is the only way for Political Parties to cooperate by working together based on the values of determination, steadfast spirit, collaboration and honesty with your trust honorable Speaker for the country to surely reap the benefit for any development through cooperation. Anything that benefits the entire country comes from the heart of unity, it is not because of selfishness and benefit of one's own businesses, rather it is prioritizing partnership for the benefit of the country who are in support, particularly Church Leaders, the sacred servants of God. Mr Speaker, the utmost guide is your oath made on the Holy Bible in here. Whenever we speak of the Word, we are referring to our Savior Jesus Christ. Because it is written in the Book of John, "The Word was present in the beginning and the word became flesh" and the Word is our Lord and Savior. It is reason why it is very important that members with special expertise must learn to stop whenever they hear misleading statements being made by people who lack knowledge in the House.

Mr Speaker, man was created by God and there is a thin feature which makes man unique from animals. Why thin? Because God created the heavens and the earth and everything in it, and animals and then created mankind and then placed the gifts that separates mankind from animals. What are these gifts?

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God placed a soul in humans, conscious, mind and common sense to differentiate right from wrong. The problem is that Satan is never far away from man to misinform, however God chose to give mankind freedom to exercise their choice. Right or wrong, curse or eternal blessings. There are times when the mind is in the dark because Satan is taking control of the mind.

As witnessed when Satan took control of the mind of Judas Iscariot which resulted in our Savior sweating blood during his final hours. Judas had tried to exercise his evil thoughts to no avail, why? Because it is no longer Judas, rather it is Satan himself in Judas.

Mr Speaker, it is why an individual chooses evil as his mind is being devoured by the devil and such is a thin difference between a person that is in the dark, and a living person with an existing soul, and a person who behaves in an animalistic way, the thinness is extremely different. Hence, it is imperative to pray to God for His shield in times of temptations.

Mr Speaker, I have discussed talents we use to make good decisions for the betterment of the Government. However, who is this Government? Which Government are we working for? There is an interpretation, the Government consists of three arms where power is vested in. The arm that makes Laws of the Parliament, and the interpretation of the Laws pertains to the Judiciary, and the implementation of these laws pertains to the Executive. That is another narrow interpretation of the Government. However when we define the definition of Government in detail, it involves the Head of State, Member of the Council of Deputies, Parliament, Executive, Judiciary, Council of Churches and the citizens of the country. That being said, it is the wider definition of the word Government, it involves all of us. Who is this Government? This is the Government of all Samoans. Whose Parliament, is it? It is the Parliament of the Independent State of Samoa. Hence, if we are speaking about Government, it is a broad noun. There are heretics who take it upon them to defame the Government. Do not forget that it is yourself whom you are defaming before the eyes of the general public. It is our collective responsibility to try and develop our Government.

During the continuous bimonthly Cabinet meetings between the Cabinet and all Government Heads, it discusses the way forward for developments. Furthermore, I would normally culminate our discussion with GDP or the Gross Domestic Product. What is Gross Domestic Product? This is the total amount of money collected in the country, which is slightly above 2 billion, which includes the Government and individuals. Irrespective of the sources of funds, there is a way to measure it, then I would say, "You must keep in mind these words, you are all part of the Government."

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GDP is the fruit of your work. Which means, we are all interdependent. If a person employed by the Office of the Legislative Assembly sees a water leakage at the HRPP headquarters, the Samoa Water Authority must be contacted and be notified of this leakage. In saying that, we are all part of the Government. No individual is required to sit in the corner and say, the service is up to them to fix as that is not my duty". It takes only one dead fly to send an evil odor to the oil. Each one of us has a responsibility to do.

Mr Speaker and the dignity of Parliament, these are challenges we will continue to face. In some ways, we will always experience selfish thoughts. The Government will continue to face these challenges. Selfish. I will briefly give 2 examples to demonstrate an example.

We had discussed the MOU agreement last night or a signed agreement submitted before Cabinet. The HRPP Party had initially undertook administration at the end of 1982. And I was appointed by Tofilau to oversee 3 Ministries. But I was working as an Associate Minister at the time from was the Ministry of Finance. So whilst working, majority of the work I did pertained to Ministerial matters in the Ministry of Finance. So whenever the budget was presented before Parliament, it was the Prime Minister who was also the Minister of Finance at the time that was carrying out this role. So during my time, the Minister of Agriculture suddenly rose up and said, I have come to tell you that there are foreign investors who are wealthy, they have an MOU agreement that needed to be signed urgently. I probed the Minister of Agriculture for the particulars of the proposed MOU of which then, my experience in working in the Government kicked in and I advised him it is safer to procure a proposal to Cabinet and seek the advice of the Attorney General's office to protect the dignity of this Government from potential legal liability. The advice was then sought from the Ministry of Finance who were the Ministry Heads that hold expertise in international finance matters for them to review the plans and queries. So that they can quickly determine whether this was a dream or the truth.

Moreover, they too have special contacts with foreign Organizations or ways to attract foreign countries. The process required independent and non-partisan reports which tells us whether or not they have money. The following Wednesday Cabinet met to discuss, and this was a Monday we were talking. The former Minister is still alive if you are listening in, then I would recall the events that had happened back in 1983, this is what we did. This was my bible ever since. Whenever a submission was given by any Minister, we would always seek the advice of the Attorney General to ensure the legal protection of the Government. We would seek a report from the Ministry of Finance where people are specially trained of foreign matters regarding money. The Central Bank was later established, and they too have this expertise.

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So in specific, the House of Samoa is built together. But these are the processes that must be done for the Government's protection. Foreign investors must submit an MOU agreement to the Minister or whoever before it is presented to Parliament, why? It is necessary to carry out collective discourses in order to make good decisions for the development of Samoa. There are also times, when we become too desperate in our decision making specifically when it comes to Government issues leading us with nothing. Mr Speaker, this is my constant reminder to Ministers, present reports, present reports, seek the recommendation from the Head of that Ministry. All decisions made by Cabinet are a collective agreement formed from all viewpoints.

Honorable Speaker, with regards to the subject of measles raised in Parliament last night. It is imperative to examine closely the events that occurred in the past. What happened during that time? Cabinet has called for National Health Service to merge. Prior to that, they were two separate entities due to many reports and recommendations by several Committee of Enquiries in the start, stating that this is the most effective course of engagement for the Ministry, hence the separation in 2006. There were many defects in the system for the Ministry of Health at the time. So the Commission of Enquiry from New Zealand came up with a model system they were using in New Zealand to be applied here.

Hence is reason for the separation in 2006. In 2019 during the measles outbreak, it coincided with Cabinet's decision to merge the two entities based on the advice from the Nurses Association and the letter of complaint that was written by the former President Faamanatu to the Government. Which said, Tui do leave aside this stupid thing you are doing as it is not good. This led to Cabinet's decision whereby the Ministry will return to the old doing. It has already been tried out and Government had followed the decision of the Commission and found out that the issue about the merging was still not resolved. Before this, Cabinet appointed a Commission of Inquiry tasked with investigating the feasibility of the merge, which consisted of Professor Asofou, Former CEO for PSC Dr Faamausili Matagalofi and Former Attorney General Brenda Heather. The searching of the best people to be a part of the Commission of Inquiry was done. What happened next? It resulted into issues that had arose.

There were complaints by some of the Nurses that were published in the Newspapers specifically about a triangular organizational structure of which they claimed was unclear about the Deputy Position for nurses. I then called a meeting in my office to find a remedy, and based on personal observation there was no room for a solution as both parties did not want to concede to the other. I then presented the matter to Cabinet of which they suggested a Commission of Inquiry.

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The established Commission of Inquiry coincided with the incident in Savaii which resulted in the death of two infants. Hence is reason I stated last night that those who do not have children can never understand this sort of matter. It is only those that bear children, especially infants. We know for sure from that dreadful day based on reports, that it was a routine vaccination day for the infants. The first mother's child passed away after the first jab, of which then the second mother was hesitant to follow suit. However, the other nurse on duty encouraged her to vaccinate her child which then resulted in the same result as the first child. Imagine the feeling of the second mother, who saw the death of the first child and then witnessed the death of the second child.

Words cannot encapsulate the feeling of losing a child and only mothers can understand the totality of the feeling. Bear in mind, that we had just finished one Commission of Inquiry for the remerge, but already there were notices calling for people to refrain from vaccinating their children. It was a matter that was casually discussed in Cabinet; look at the outrageous environment the executive of the Hospital is now in. The environment whereby a remedy is being sought, when the decision for a merge is now done. Whilst there is disorder, a Commission of Inquiry is being set up and yet the incident that is occurring from Savaii, with another Commission of Inquiry to be set up. So come to think of it, imagine the feelings of worry for those government workers who were the subject of the investigations Mr Speaker while awaiting the final verdict. You too are no angel as all concerns are now subject to you.

Honorable Speaker, Commission of Inquiries are not good and are a blight on the reputation of a Minister, CEO and Management. So for us, we are now not only awaiting 1 Commission or Inquiry Report but two, of which was deferred as the matter had been rightfully referred to the Police.

The verdict for the case of the two children finally came out in December of which I believe could have been moved forward if they were forthcoming to their charges. The outcome of this honorable Speaker? People moved their kids to NZ for vaccination due to the mistrust. There was criticism in the Newspaper. There were dissidents who were calling to boycott the vaccine as it is not safe. There were also those who opposed on religious grounds and stated that God will provide them with immunity. If we can recall, I placed emphasis on the importance of heeding medical advice and bring the children in for vaccination.

Mr Speaker if we can recall, I utilized the analogy of a pastor who was about to be washed away by a flood, the floodwaters reached the foundation of his house, of which then a life raft came to his aid. The lift raft had 3 people and they called out to the pastor "Sir, jump in" of which he responded "I believe in the living God and He will never forsake me". So the lift raft left, the rain continued and soon the house was flooded with only a small area that separated the pastor from the roof.

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The Lift Raft came again, and they called out again “Sir please come we are here to save you”. The rain and flooding continued of which resulted in the death of the pastor. He made it to heaven and came before the Almighty and he proceeded to complain to him for forsaking him in the flood. God then responded by saying “How many times did I send the lift raft to your aid”? The question is Mr Speaker, who are we waiting for? God sent the medical officers to vaccinate our children, but they refused. Why? Because of the incident in Savaii. Honorable Speaker, we hear it every night on television the endless advertisements for children to get vaccinated. The death toll continued to climb. When taken to the hospital to enquire for a doctor, we found out that they had tried to seek the help of traditional healers. We heard to of a variant of the measles whereby it came together with pneumonia.

It was in the mindset of these mothers, who were born before 1963 that the traditional fuefuesina plant is sufficient remedy for everything as I too was given this remedy in the past. What then can we do? The mothers who were remedied with local herbal medicines prefer to take their children there when there was advertisement from the hospital every night to bring in your children to vaccinate. What did we do?

We closed down the entire country and initiated the mass vaccination campaign and we were probably the first country to have this term be known to the United Nations. This was done in conjunction with the Alii and Faipule, we went from Savaii to Aana, Tuamasaga to monitor.

I even personally went to see and visited these children who have contracted the measles. With regards to the red flags, on the morning of the vaccination campaign, Mr Speaker even places which is a 2-minute walk to the hospital were seen with heaps of red flags. Why was there a lot of red flags there Mr Speaker? Because of the mistrust, it is in my belief Mr Speaker, if they had been vaccinated in March based on the recommendation or February or December 2018 it would have helped immensely. Mistrust cannot be dispelled Mr Speaker, post government closure and the mop up operation which saw 2500 unvaccinated in Savaii. I hold firm belief that if vaccination calls were heeded in March, then there would not have been any lives wasted. How can we make a mother believe Mr Speaker? We cannot unless they themselves give their consent. Mr Speaker, that is proof, 2 years prior. The infants have passed due to the consent of the mothers, they only admitted it before the court on the day of the court case.

The reason for raising this matter honorable Speaker is because the concern of being wrongly blamed during our proceedings is very important. However, in Cabinet Mr Speaker, there is only one Rule, and that is Collective Responsibility.

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If any Minister wishes to speak on the matter, before a decision is reached, you must convey your thoughts. But when a consensus is reached, that is the collective will of Cabinet as the chance was given. So if a person opposes, then they can resign. Also during our several Cabinet meetings, everyone is given the chance to speak for as the Leader, I need all views and recommendations to build up the Government. During our adjournment last night, I recall a former female Minister raising a matter which I avow was always raised by members during her former times in Cabinet. I have longed waited for her advice to which she responded; they had discussed it when I was on a business trip. I then reminded that all discussions and decision including serious issues being made inside Cabinet they must all be noted down as Cabinet Directives or FK. And upon my return, I felt completely touched by the job of our health workers and their continuous service in the early hours of the morning.

I then drafted a letter of thanksgiving to the female Minister of Health. With a copy to the Hon Tuitama who is my right-hand man, the Deputy Prime Minister. This was the contents of my submitted letter, I heed great appreciation to you for your bravery, I further wish to congratulate all the health workers who have worked day and night to ensure the success of the national vaccination campaign in efforts to preventing the measles outbreak. Honorable Minister, who opposes these efforts? Whoever is unsupportive of you, given the good plans laid out, do submit a submission before Cabinet for their termination. Whether it be a CEO or whoever, do give your submission to us for their termination if they are dishonest or abuse of power. Then I give an example from the hospital, there was a former Ministry Head who was my relative and I was called after him. And when I had received a huge study which seems to pinpoint a few issues, I submitted it to the Cabinet. The decision was made to terminate him temporarily whilst investigations were carried out. Further to that statement, there was also another relative of mine who was a former Government Head, and when I had received the recommendations for his termination, I did not object. We had the same name; he was my chief brother. Mr Speaker, these matters are very crucial. I told him, even people who hold high Government positions, their decision was made by Cabinet.

Mr Speaker that is how democracy is done. It is done in the open without complaining. Anyone who complains behind on the decisions made and becomes judgmental about it using 4 fingers, then do note that there is one finger pointing back at you. Before you point four fingers, note that your thumb is pointing at you. So before you judge another person, make sure you look at yourself first, and judge yourself first.

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Mr Speaker. Honorable Speaker, such are matters I wanted to discuss. The meaning of the explanations given, once you go outside and discuss the things you did inside the Cabinet and complain about it when you were part of the Cabinet, then do realize, that you have violated the Golden Rule of Parliamentary Government for all Cabinets. During the time you make decisions and complain again, then it means you have forgotten your duty and oath of allegiance.

Mr Speaker this is the conclusion of my Ministerial Speech, which will be useful today and, in the future, especially anyone who will be elected in the new Administration. Whether is it God's will for us to return or not, nevertheless, the words I have uttered today are very useful for the future.

There is the principle of collective responsibility mandated for all Cabinet Ministers. The principle to uphold integrity in your Cabinet roles. Once you give your oath of allegiance, everyone is free to contribute to the decisions made. But once the decision is reached binding everyone else then that is the consensus. For the information of a new Cabinet. We do not know as the appointment of a Government can only be done by God alone. But those are the principles of integrity that guides one to serving the country. During our talks with the World Bank, we discussed the merge, and they were very supportive with this change. The course of engagement we took was in the model of New Zealand, i.e. removal of the service and the administration. These were the words of the World Bank. Now we are therefore very happy that you have decided to move away from that. They also noted that NZ had already abandoned their earlier separation as it does not work. However, Great Britain is still following the same model and their Health Services of Great Britain, is one of the worst in the whole of Europe.

Mr Speaker, the recommendations are very important, and they too have declared their financial support from the World Bank to operate all these changes that will be made.

Mr Speaker, this is the implementation of the testimonies which is the reason I stood up, as the majority have discussed. The reason why these donors continue to assist us is because they seek to assist us to optimize our systems. If they see their assistance is being exploited for personal gain, they will cut all funding.

Mr Speaker with that being said, God Bless our Proceedings today. Soifua.

MR SPEAKER: Well done thanks. Parliament has well received the clear statement of the Government Leader. As such, equal opportunities for all. Such is the supporting statement for all going forward. Whoever will be called by God, they are guidelines that will be applied to operate our Government, and our collaboration will lighten our burden.

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– second reading debate

It is like that, we must focus on the will of God, as Governments changes and does not remain permanent. We ought to collaborate, one heart one spirit, such is the Government which God dwells in, it is said that no strength can defy us. As such this is useful for everyone.

I call upon your honorable... I call upon the Hon Minister of Women, Community and Social Development.

Afioga Hon Tuitama Talalelei Tuitama (Minister of Women, Community and Social Development): Mr Speaker, no I have upstand to move the motion, *That the Ministerial Statement of the Hon Prime Minister be Tabled as the Official Records of Parliament. With due respect.*

Seconded by the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour and the Minister of Tourism.

Motion was approved.

MR SPEAKER: Very well we shall do as that. I call upon the Hon Lady Minister. Perhaps there is not much left, as most of the general matters and policies of the Ministry of Health have already been elaborated. So go ahead and conclude.

Tofa Hon FAIMALOTOA KIKA IEMAIMA STOWERS (Minister of Health): Thank you Mr Speaker for the chance granted to resume my statement most especially for the sake of our Ministry listening in. I wish to greet everyone rising to this beautiful morning in God's abiding love and kindness to the dignity of this House, and the listening country.

Thank you to the Leader of the House for the clarifying statement provided with regards to the many issues that is necessary for us to know especially the final part of his speech, which has highlighted some of the areas presented last night in relation to measles. I trust the statement has provided a clear understanding except for this additional bit I wish to give Mr Speaker for the sake of our Ministry.

The clarification, the year 2018, there were 2 divisions under the Ministry of Health, in accordance to this report. Service provider is a role of the National Health Service. Such service was implemented for the operation and seeing of patients including immunization of children.

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The main role of the Ministry of Health at that time was regulatory and monitoring. They monitor and regulate these services implemented by the NHS. So these were some of the issues that was...So during the incident that occurred in Safotu as mentioned by the Hon Minister, this EPI program was under the NHS or the Extended Programme Immunization.

The Inquiry Commission as stated by the member in relation to the incident, the advice that was received, it is this Commission that had received this MOH Report or the Ministry of Health in relation to the incident that had happened in Safotu, the recommendation put forth was to immediately carry out immunization for the children. I believe this is the Report that he was referring to. It was the Report that was submitted to the Inquiry Commission as recommended by the Ministry with regards to this situation.

Very well, it is clarified. For the approval of Parliament Legislations incorporated by the Ministry, it took one month to do that and prepare the commencement of the measles immunization in April 2019 and that was when I did not commence work with the Ministry as I was still with a different Ministry.

In addition the red flags mentioned by the female member saying that it was unaware, the explanation from the Ministry...

MR SPEAKER: Very well, I advise the Hon Minister, do note that the Leader of the House has repeated his clarification on all these matters and I salute him for doing it. All is now clarified. He has also...The issues, whenever we talk about concerns, we need not to stress again the issues but the solutions. This was also stated by the Hon Prime Minister, we had closed and went ahead to implement them. It was overwhelming what we did in this part of the world. It is all done now. There is nothing left for us to clarify. But I beg tolerance to the Hon as I...What other matters have we got left, I beg tolerance, we will come to it. Let us state the words of the fagot, whatever matter we have left, let us raise it.

But since we have come to our recess time, do get to it in your statement and conclude when we come back from our break. Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly now set aside for normal recess.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly were set aside for normal recess at 10:25am and resumed at 11:08am.

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Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021
– second reading debate

Debate on Government Response resumed on the second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021.

MR SPEAKER: I announce the resumption of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

During our recess the Hon Minister of Health was speaking. So with due respect I call upon the Lady Minister of Health to take the floor, I take it that there are a few more issues to address. Bless your statement.

Tofa Hon FAIMALOTOA KIKA IEMAIMA STOWERS: Thank you Mr Speaker. I believe that we have the physical strength to continue our work this morning, and I thank you and the Office for such preparations.

Last night, as you heard, I read out a lot of Laws. In addition to this, many policies have been developed, the plans to implement these policies and the implementation of many service areas of the Ministry.

Well, there are lots and lots of other things, but I will try to outline some situations that need be known. From the year 2016 until this year, these are some of the projects and programs that have been implemented by the Health Department, to improve the process of the implementation of services, as well as to improve the performance of management and the administration of work. Thus, we have drafted, implemented and considered Laws, policies, guidelines and methods to guide the services and implementation programs of the Ministry of Health. Other duties have been established and worked by the Advisory Committee for Health Programs, which has a Special Committee established for working on such recommendations and plans, the Health Programme Advisory Committee.

Some major developments for health were implemented and achieved, including the establishment of a prosthetic building to be used. Repair and expansion of the Malietoa Tanumafili hospital in Tuasivi Savaii as it was officially opened for use on 23rd December 2016. Likewise, the first warehouse to store medicines was officially opened and used as a treatment, the pharmaceutical warehouse.

In this sensitive period that we are in because of the effects of the world on Covid-19, this warehouse is very useful to provide the necessary products for preparedness services to respond to the disease as the world is now, and to store it for distribution because now we are witnessing the difficult situation of importing goods since the disease.

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The Central Office of General Health Services has also been officially opened – Primary Health Care Center which includes all the services that are implemented for the general health of the country. The work has also been completed for the improvement of the 60 machines for the site to accommodate the National Kidney Foundation. However, an agreement is currently being accepted for the opening of travel so that engineers can come from Germany for the installation of these dialysis machines. At the moment, only 22 machines are performing the service of the Samoa National Kidney Foundation.

Some of the health improvement services have been implemented in this way, including the improvement of the equipment that sends hot water to the hospital, our Boiler System, all of these parts have been completed. The special machine to produce oxygen for the central hospital has arrived, as well as other machines used for eye surgery. There have also been arrangements made for services in district hospitals. For clarification in 2019 when the reunification of the Ministry was recognized in accordance with the plans of the Government in the month of February, adjustments were implemented so that the district hospitals would be bases to implement general health services, the primary health care services and public health services. In order to revive the implementation of these services to work together with village and district authorities to further encourage this objective.

One of the areas that has been implemented is the appointment of doctors. As all are aware they are now working in district hospitals in Upolu as well as Savaii. And this is one of the achievements implemented this Term, to assist in the implementation of the adjustment of services in the district hospitals and small hospitals, in the appointment of male and female doctors to work permanently there than travelling all the way to the central hospital to see a doctor.

One of the conditions for the improvement of the service is the management of health professional councils on work process, such as the doctor's council, nurses' council, pharmacy professional association, health support professional council, dental council. Not only that but managing meetings for the general health sector, annual health sector forums. In addition to this, the adjustment of the implementation of health services as there is a merger.

The most outstanding aspect of this plan is the merger our own people are working together to implement the merger of the Ministry and to adjust the performance of its services together with the Ministry of Finance, the Public Service Commission, Ministry of Health as well as the Office of the Attorney General. Because for such projects consultants or overseas specialists were paid to do it and a lot of money was spent.

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Another aspect is to upskill the health workers. This is one of the main objectives that have been prioritized because it is believed that the employees of Health are the pillars in the implementation of necessary services for the well-being and health of our people.

Another area Mr Speaker and respects of the House that the Ministry is focused on is encouraging and strengthening cooperation with its partners, because the goal of health to have a healthy Samoa cannot be realized if the health sector and its partners do not work together. Not only for partners overseas but also our partners here in the country, including Government Ministries and Organizations, Private Sector that work in the implementation of other health services.

The same goes for Church organizations, especially in communities, as assisted by the Hon Minister and the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.

One of the main programs of health works that is still valued is PEN faa-Samoa where Health works in collaboration with the World Health Organization WHO. This program has helped a lot in developing the skills and abilities especially of the young people of the communities who were trained on simple services, such as measuring diabetes and high blood pressure, to assist with the shortage of staff to carry out research conducted for the public to check whether they are affected by serious diseases that affect organs or NCDs.

One of the Ministry's partners as of 2018, on an agreement signed with the Government of China, they have given some of their specialists to assist in the implementation of health services. Well, Mr Speaker, not only that, but we are also trying to carry out all this work at the same time while priority is being given to the protection of our country from Covid-19.

Mr Speaker and the respects of Parliament, there is a lot of work, programs especially major developments that have been carried out by the health sector within this Term in the implementation of its services, and it is still ongoing. Not only that, but we are also trying to continue developing the skills and qualifications of the staff in all different areas. Because I believe that despite the challenges stated, there are many and many challenges, but I will leave this matter, as the Lord is looking at the work that the staff are doing day and night, without resting.

Let this hour be an opportunity as a humble servant and representative of the Ministry of Health and General Health Services to express our gratitude to our Government in terms of support and assistance in the management and implementation of health development for the prosperity of our country in general.

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I would also like to express my gratitude to Samoa for your strong support on advice given, also for the different warnings on areas we need to work on together, it is here we see the love of God for our country up until now.

Mr Speaker, even though there is a lot, but I will stop here on a recommendation but...

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Mauli (Palauli West): Mr Speaker, an opportunity please.

MR SPEAKER: The Minister is concluding her remarks. I note that you did not mention any matter related to health in your speech. The Minister is now concluding her speech. I call upon the Minister to conclude your speech.

Tofa Hon FAIMALOTOA IEMAIMA KIKA STOWER: Thank you Mr Speaker. Well...the member we can talk sometime outside. Mr Speaker, I will now speak to my constituency. Greetings to the respects of my beloved constituency.

Starting from the holy servants of God serving within the constituency. To the Elder of the Council of Churches of Samoa Rev Susuga Tanielu and wife Siataata, the respects of the Holy Family to the two Priests, Reverend Father Leaega and Reverend Father Matini. Reverend of the Catholic Church Susuga Anitelea and wife Koleti, the Reverend Minister of the Ministry Susuga Faavae and wife, the Bishop of the Mormon Church, Elder Simeti and wife Norma, I also acknowledge the Sisters of the Faith of the school of the Scared Heart.

I also acknowledge the Reverend of the EFKS in our village of Manase, Susuga Filipino and wife Falemoa. I thank you for the support, thank you for the prayers, thank you for giving me strength especially on advice you give me when we meet. Not only in your prayers, day and night for the blessings upon our constituency, but I felt the warmth and courage because of your prayers that touched me. May God continue to give everlasting life to continue your calling, for the benefit of the constituency, especially our beloved country Samoa. May you continue to be blessed in spirit, for God and his will.

The respects of my beloved constituency of Gagaifomauga No.1, *Afifio o Sao e Fa ma Aiga Sa Umalau, i le Alaalatai o lau Fetalaiga i le Tulafale o le Alii o le Itu lau Tofa Lavea, o Oe o le Pule na muaimalae, Leatipouniu ma le Faasau, faapea le mamalu o le Nofo a ituaiga ia Safotu.* I also greet *saoao* and *tamaitai*, also the strength of our constituency, as well as the youth and children of our village in Safotu.

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I formally greet the respects of our village in Manase, *i le Afio o Taito ma ona Alo, ma Aiga Sa Umalau faapea lau Fetalaiga i le Tauasa*. I also greet our faletua and tausi, saoa and tamaitai, the aumaga and youth, and even our young children.

The respects of my constituency, I express my gratitude from the bottom of my soul, for your authority, your respect, and especially for praising my weakness and insignificance. You crowned and embraced me as your servant, to stand in and represent the seat of our constituency. I sailed on my journey with expectation, that I will get alot of blessings whilst your support and prayers.

The respects of my constiency, I apologize, whatever stance or behavior that is not noble in your view while I performed the duty for our constituency, pursuant to your opinion and support, I pray and humbly ask that you forgive and forget, hence this is the reach of what I was able to accomplish, because our Governments share is short and limited. But it is said that the Lord makes the day, and the sun will rise again. The prayer of your servant is that God, who is the owner of all wealth, will give us many blessings for our constituency, as well as Samoa our beloved country.

My constituency of Gagaifomauga No.1, as we head into the countrys elections, let us choose with God, because He is the one who appoints Government. Whatever the result of your will, I am vigilant and still have the strength from God, to serve you my beloved constituency, for the blessing of our peoplem especially Samoa from the highest mountain, to the smallest children.

Mr Speaker, the House has been informed, as well as Samoa listening in, of your retirement Mr Speaker, espeically some of the elders of our Parliament, who have long served this Assembly where the Laws of the country are made and where polticial decision making is implemented as well as the economy of Samoa. Mr Speaker of the House, Afioga Hon Leaupepe Toleafoa Faafisi, the Hon Minister Tuitama Dr. Leao Talalelei Tuitama, Hon Afioga Aeau Peniamina Leavai, who was also former Speaker of Parliament, as well as Afioga Faasootauloa Pati, former member of Cabinet. Thank you for your hard work, thank you for your bravery, thank you for serving the country. May God bless you all in retirement, and may He bless you all with good health, to be able to carry out other duties awaited by families, communities especially in serving the Church. The truth is, you will all be missed.

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The Associate Minister Afioga Mulipola Laki, I commend you for efforts, I wish you all the best in your retirement at this time, thus the sun will rise again. The sitting of Chief Executives of Government Ministries and Organisations and your Associates and all employees of each Ministry, thank you for your hardwork. Thank you for your perserverance. Thank you for your patriotism. We have only made decisions based on your advice, also you are the ones who implement and fulfill our work and your staff, whilst the support of Samoa.

The Chairperson of the National Emergency Committee, as well as the Main Committee, thank you, thank you very much. Thank you for your strong support, not only for the advice, but for carrying our difficult tasks day and night, especially on your strong support on protecting of lives from the deadly disease of Covid-19. May the Lord protect your lives, as well as the staff, in the difficult work you are faced with everyday.

Our Ministry of Health, the Chief Executive Officer, Administration and all staff, I commend you all for your patience, as well as perserverance. Even though there are many challenges that you face most times, especially with the many complaints, but your priority is still the protection of Samoa, our beloved country. This does not count the many other works and the efforts of our staff in different areas of service, may God protect your lives as well as ours, espeically your parents, families and children.

I also want to voice a heart of gratitude to my Associate Minister, Afioga Tofa Lio Foleni, I commend you for your efforts, thank you for your strong support as we worked together. Most of the times I would be working here in Upolu, while you are hardworking in Savaii, letting me know of the different services that is needed. When I need you in Apia you would come, may God bless you, your wife and children.

Mr Speaker, before I conclude, I want to express thanks as well as send my love to all my families listening in, not only here in Samoa but those residing in different countires overseas. Thank you for your support, love as well as prayers and continous support.

I want to greet as well and express my love to my sisters and brothers especially our children, also to all members of this family, working not only overseas but here in Samoa in your villages as preachers and nuns especially my beloved nun sister who calls me every evening. Sister Sose, thank you for your prayers and I commend you for your efforts. Also to Assistant Preachers and their wives, I commend everyone, thank you for the prayers, thank you for the support, may God bless us both equally.

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Well to the respects of our Parliament this Term, as well as the support of Samoa from the highest mountain to the lowest, I wish you all the best in the upcoming elections of the country we do not have long to go, especially our prayers done together to God for His continuous love and kindness upon Samoa, as we face such difficult times, because of the pandemic that worries the whole world, farewell and God bless.

Parliament expressed their happiness with applause after the clarification speech of the Minister of Health.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, the contintuency also the country and especially this Parliament has listened to your wonderful speech Hon Minister. Such is our work, as we discuss matters tabled for this last Sitting of this Parlimentary term.

It is unfortunate that this our last meeting for this Term, the Chair believes opportunity should be given to Parliament members to speak to their constituencies, also Ministers should be allowed to do so as well. Back then when we came, there is a different speech for Ministers and the one made by members of Parliament. Speeches of Parliament are heard by the constituencies also their thanks within the surroundings of Government. But Ministrial speeches, it is like so there is no need to advice it, nonetheless, unfortunately this is the last Sitting

I call upon the Hon Minister of Revenue, to speak in relations to matters raised by members as well as to clarify other areas, that has been implemented in the plans of the Ministry.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT (Minister of Revenue & Police and Prisons): Thank you Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to make a statement on the Ministries that I and the Associate Minister are carrying. Before I make a statement, Mr Speaker, I am different from my constituency as of this time. We are at the end of this 5 years however my constituency has been divided.

Therefore I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my constituency of Vaa o Fonoti, then I will respond to some of the matters conveyed, Mr Speaker it will not be long. I take this important opportunity to voice my thanks, to the worship of the Gospel preachers, who are teaching enlightenment for confusion and ignorance and giving spiritual life to my constituency of Atua. May the hope of His eternal Kingdom grow greatly.

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I believe that with your prayers, I have been successful in taking over the Chair of our constituency for the past 5 years for political affairs of Samoa. The voice of your servant has been conveyed, on the decisions of our country through my position of Minister, as I was appointed to, your servant in this XVI Parliamentary term of the Government of Samoa.

Thank you to the Spiritual Leader, Father of the Congregational Christian Church, Susuga Asotasi Mutime. Thank you Reverend Father Une, for the advice that was given, it gave me the courage to keep on carrying out my duties as a Minister. Thank you to the holy servants of God, within our constituency. Thank you for supporting me, was Asomua remembered, for his house to be moved to the mountain? If not for your support and praise, the truth is duty would be in vain. Such is true of the scriptures of the Psalmist David who said, ‘where there is Christ there is also love.’ My prayer, may the gift of the Holy Spirit be brought forth, fill your vessel, in carrying out your calling, in preaching the will of God, in our constituency of Vaa o Fonoti. Thank you, thank you very much. God Bless.

I will not forget Atua, and I will not forget Afia and its respects, to the sacred worship of my constituency of Vaa o Fonoti. *Le Paia i le Afio o Ulualofaiga ma Aiga e Lua ma le nofo a Usoalii. Afio le Gafa ma le Aloasina, maliu mai le Toafa, ma le Matua ia Talamaivao. Maliu mai e na taitai, ia Atua o le Fauono.*

Afio Gafa ma le Alosina ma Suafa, lau Fetalaiga i le Too o le Fua o Molioo ma lo outou aiga sa Molioo. Alalatai le ailaoa aemaise Malepeai o le aitu o le nuu. It is because of your respect for this humble person, that has enabled me to carry this position for 10 years for our constituency in the political arena of Samoa in its Parliament. The words of the country, work that is supported end in success. Thank you for the support, thank you for the love and the respect. You have all done well and accepted me wholeheartedly. Thanks again for the praise and the support.

I apologize, if there have been any developments in the constituency that have not been accomplished. I believe that whoever will emerge in the upcoming elections, he or she will be the one to complete some of these remaining developments, for the benefit of the constituency in the future.

I use this opportunity to officially resign from the position of member of our constituency. *Ua inu malie faleselau o Lufasiaitu ae tofumalemo le aiga sa Tagaloalagi*, such is the saying pertaining to our constituency. Because of your respect through the position of representative member that I held for these 10 years, thank you.

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Mr Speaker, I will begin my speech with the Ministries under my designation. The Ministry of Police and Prisons and the Ministry of Customs and Revenue. I will start with the Ministry of Police. First of all, I acknowledge Samoa listening in, to His Excellency Le Ao O le Malo of Samoa. Afioga Tuimalealiifano Sualauvi II and Good lady. Greetings to the Member of Council of Deputies, Afioga Le Mamea Tuiletufuga Ropati and consort. Greetings Mr Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Samoa, Afioga Toleafoa Faafisi as well as the Deputy Speaker. I acknowledge the Hon Prime Minister, Susuga Tuilaepa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoui, as well as Cabinet Ministers and respectable members of the Parliament of the Government of Samoa.

I acknowledge the Chief Justice, the President of Land and Titles Court, the class of Judges of the Court of Samoa, Chief Executive Officers of Government Ministries and Organizations, especially the private sector to business owners of all Samoa. *Le paia lava mai Saua seia paia Fili ma Puletuu, na tauilo ai Malo i le usuga a Tumua ma Pule Ituau ma Alataua, Aiga i le Tai ma le Vaa o Fonoti. O Tama ma o latou Aiga, Aiga ma o latou Tama, Aiga o Nofo ma Aiga o Papa ma Aiga o Taifaifa.*

Least not forgetting the support of the island in the East, *Sua and Vaifanua, Fofo ma Aitulagi, Saole ma Saleaamua ma le Launiu na Saelua. Tootoo o le Faleula ma upu i le Manuatele*, also the *Aiga sa Levi*, at any Altar in our country, who are praying for the future blessings of Samoa.

Those are the respects and honors of this morning, which I will not deliberate further, because I know Samoa has already been sanctified, and there is no need to voice it, as Samoa is a country that has been divided and blessed.

First, condolences to the constituency and Tagaifolua Vaelaa and child. Regarding the absence of the father of the family, Afioga Vaafusuaga Toleafoa Vaafusuaga Ken Poutoa. May God have mercy on you and your child, the hope is that the Apostle of Divine Mercy will be with his Lord. He worked and served there, blessed is he, as the Lord found that he is doing this service. Also to my brother Lealailepule in relation to the absence of the mother of the family, I believe that the father has been comforted, because of Gods holy call upon the mother.

However, we still applaud the kindness of the Almighty God for he was able to safely guide our lives. We are now able to meet in good faith but not in adversity. This is the cause of this morning's tidings, I also believe this morning, it is not a secret in this Assembly, that we do not have long to go, before we reach the end of the XVI Parliamentary term of the Independent Parliament of Samoa. But we continue to receive blessings from the Living God, to carry out our various duties and responsibilities assigned to us for the 5 years nearing completion.

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I stand with respect as the Minister of Police and Prisons and Corrections, to express and convey my gratitude to Samoa, to esteemed individuals, the holy servants of God at any Altar in villages and constituencies. The authority of Alii and Faipule, mothers and young women, especially the strength of the village listening in from all over Samoa and the whole world. Thank you, thank you very much for supporting the work of the Ministry of Prisons and Rehabilitation this Term. My service to uphold such duties are coming to an end, the journey of the past 5 years has not been easy. It was a journey full of disasters and hardships. There were many problems encountered by the Ministry, however the Ministry did not give up in performing its service to the best of its ability. We are now delighted in Faleseu celebrating in Maaomalie. *O lenei ua tatou oaoa ai nei i Faleseu ae sapi i maa o malie.*

Our journey has come to an end, but the duties and assignments of all those who work in this Ministry, in serving Samoa and its people are going smoothly.

I take this important opportunity to acknowledge all of Samoa, especially to all members of the XVI Parliamentary term. For the work that the staff of the Ministry of Police and Prisons and Corrections Services faced within the 5 years nearing completion.

As you know, in March of last year 2020, these two services were reunited under the auspices of the Police Commissioner. That is how I assumed the position of Minister and Associate Minister, until this morning. I would now like to begin the introduction of the services for Prisons and Corrections Services.

On July 1, 2016, I was appointed to undertake the position of Minister and Tofa Sooalo Mene as Associate Minister for the Ministry of Prisons and Corrections Services. This Ministry of Prisons and Corrections Services was recently separated from the Ministry of Police in the year 2014. Under the Prisons and Corrections Act 2013, the responsibilities of the Ministry are regulated. Under the guidance of the Commissioner of Prisons, come a time and I will explain Afioiga Taitosaua and others. Prison duties are not easy, and there are many difficulties and challenges. Not only for me as Minister but especially the Commissioner and the whole staff. Starting from this Parliamentary term, working at the prison in Tafaigata, which is now been moved to Tanumalala. For prison services, there are 3 prisons in Samoa.

Tanumalala is where many members of the public that have been convicted are housed, serving their sentences. There is also a prison in Oloamanu and Vaiaata Savaii.

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Mr Speaker on the 1st of July 2016, around 10pm, I went to the prison at Tafaigata. This is the same day I was appointed. The reason why I went at that time was, I wanted to see the condition of the prison at night. I was given leadership of the prison when there were 629 prisoners. It was a heartbreaking sight. I saw that night that the prison was full, no more space. In the room I saw and went to, I believe that was the situation elsewhere, and a new prison should be built. The next day I went to the Prime Minister and requested the construction of the prison in Tanumalala to be implemented.

It started off with the Hon Sala, the Minister of Police and Prisons while I was Associate Minister, this was when the prison started construction. The guiding principles for carrying out the duties of the Prisons and Corrections Act 2013 section 3, are centered on 8 topics as follows. Ensure that the prisoners are managed in accordance with Samoan tradition, culture and community values, and in such a manner as will facilitate the return to ordinary life in the Samoan community of a prisoner when released from prison.

2. Recognize international standards, and obligations related to the treatment of prisoners.

3. Apply to the fullest extent possible the rights and obligations of United Nations Convention to prevent racism, discrimination against women, CEDAW. And the convention with the United Nations rights of the child, CRC.

4. To maintain discipline and order with fairness and firmness, with no more restrictions than is required for the proper management of prisons and prisoners in accordance with Samoan cultural and community values.

5. Facilitate the shift of underlying philosophy from the containment of prisoners to the provision of effective and appropriate correctional services.

6. Restoring the lives of convicted criminals. And to strengthen their recognition, and a spirit to take personal responsibility. To be able to re-build their morale.

7. Prison staff must be disciplined leaders. In order to be a good leader, to make positive changes for prisoners. Lastly ensure the treatment of prisoners affected by infectious diseases or suffering any serious illness or any physical condition. These are some of the changes implemented in 2016, as we are in now. As I mentioned beforehand, at the start of the XVI Term, not long ago this service was separated from the Ministry of Police. It is believed that the desire for this separation is to be able to carry out the duties of the Ministry of Police, and the Ministry of Prisons and Corrections at the highest standard. Therefore, this new Ministry was allocated towards me to oversee in 2016.

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In 2016, two years after the separation of Police and Prisons, these are some of the milestones that were achieved. The milestone approved by Cabinet through its FK on 15/08, was the construction of the Tanumalala Prison, on 550 acres of Government land. Regulations were then prepared, for guidance of prisoners allowed out on Sundays, Weekend Release Regulation. This was due to the fact about 70% of approximately 600 prisoners were released. Therefore this Regulation was put in place.

Drafting of the Corporate Plan 2016 to 2020 and a Operational Manual Procedures. Signing of an agreement between the Prisons Services and the Government of New Zealand in regards to information sharing on managing prisons. Construction of a Prison in Tanumalala, and improve rehabilitation programs for prisoners. In the year 2016 such information is noted, there are 80 staff, with 30 women and 50 men. Number of prisoners housed, 629. Number of rehabilitation programs rolled out, 31.

MR SPEAKER: Very well, I do not wish to interrupt the speech of the Hon Minister, but just to add on to your speech, since we have arrived at our recess time for this afternoon. We will start again at 6:00pm.

With all due respect, the work of the Legislative Assembly will be suspended until 6:00 pm, and then we will resume.

With respect thank you.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly were set aside at 11:58 am and resumed at 6.10pm.

Debates continued with the Government's Responses on the second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I announce the resumption of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

I take this opportunity to once again greet the respects of the House, in the presence of the Hon Prime Minister, Cabinet as well as Associate Ministers. Well, especially to this side of the House to Chairpersons of Parliamentary Committees and all respectable members of the Assembly. Thank you for your patience. I believe strength has been renewed with the rest taken this afternoon.

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Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly were set aside as the Hon Minister of Revenue, Police and Prisons was giving his response. I respectfully call upon the Hon Minister to take the floor to continue his address.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Thank you Mr Speaker for the opportunity to once again start the clarification of the Ministry of Prisons and Corrections. In the year 2016 there were 628 recorded. This is also the year that the Associate Minister and I met the Chief Justice to see what he could do to assist with the situation at Tafaigata prisons because of the large number of prisoners.

From 2016 we went and requested, until the beginning of 2018 and the end of 2017 there were 324 prisoners up there. 304 prisoners were released as they were currently being held at the prison facility to await remanding. But the funny thing when we went there with Afioga Sooalo, that time we went together. We were worried on what the Chief Justice would say to us. When we went inside the old man said, “Man, it has been 24 years since I have been Chief Justice, but this is the first time a Minister and Associate Minister has visited my office.” We were so happy after that day because we got an answer of what we went there to ask for to minimize the number of prisoners. This is the result of releasing 304 prisoners in 2017. In 2018, a report was conducted for the evaluation of programs, especially training needs analysis report. Noted within this evaluation are areas needed to improve the skills of prisoners. As well as the continuation of the construction of the prison in Tanumalala. Increase the number of employees to 128, reducing prisoners to 324. Rehabilitation programs 35.

In 2019, the prison in Tanumalala was officially opened in June, prisoners were transferred from Tafaigata to Tanumalala. Started work for the prison in Vaiaata. Initiate work to clean up the town with prisoners from Oloamanu. Increase the number of staff by 138. Number of inmates 278, programs 48. In 2020, the construction of the general office in Tanumalala – Administration block completed. Total staff 145, total inmates 278. The prison in Tanumalala has raised the status of the local community, it is better than the prison in Tafaigata. In addition, it is surrounded by a concrete wall that makes it difficult for prisoners to escape unless there is a program for rehabilitation. This is still ongoing.

These are some works constructed at Tanumalala, cells, warden office, tower, fence, isolation cells to house prisoners who are high risk, corporate service office, plumbing, water, roads, generator, water tank, separate rooms for the ladies and males are in progress. Accommodation for staff, in Vaiaata prison.

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The total amount of expenses for projects undertaken to improve the service for prisons, especially to increase housing used by those who are in prison is \$20,717,775. This money was all brought under the Government's budget, there was no help received from outside. Thank you to the Hon Minister of Finance and the Ministry of Finance regarding this assistance to the prison. As I mentioned, it is not only to improve housing for prisoners, but the security of the dignity of the whole country is guaranteed.

As stated in the Prison and Corrections Act 2013, it emphasizes the importance of using Samoan customs and traditions for our own people who are guilty and serving their sentences in any prison in Samoa. It is noted that there are a lot of rehabilitation works, which the Government wants to be given and be carried out by prisoners, such as cleaning of the town area in Apia, especially Mapuifagalele home of the elderly. This was requested by the Sisters because of the high cost of mowing the grass, therefore prisoners were employed.

Farming programs, sewing programs, bakery and hairdresser. Construction of the prison in Vaiaata in Savaii and the Office of the Head of State in Vailele applying the skills of some men who are serving their services. Different Church Programs, as well as exercise programs for healthy living.

Samoan cultural programs every Monday, special doctors for sick prisoners which is carried out every Wednesday. Program for inmates 60 and older, the matimati program. All these programs promote the importance of the Samoan culture. The intention is to encourage those who are serving their sentences, to gain skills after serving their sentences and make it easier for them to return to their families. In spite of all these works, however, there was still word that some of the works was not completed.

In the month of March 2020 in the Parliament session the management of the prison and corrections was allocated under the authority of the Commissioner of Police as it is now. I was appointed to work together with Tofa Lenatai the Associate Minister of this Ministry.

Police services. It is necessary to recognize the work carried by the staff of the Ministry of Police from 2016 to 2020. Police work is governed by the Police Service Act 2009 and Police Service Regulation 2010. The main goal of police work is centered on these areas. 1. Maintaining Laws and orders throughout Samoa. 2. Maintenance of peace throughout Samoa. 3. Protection of life and property in Samoa. The prevention and monitoring and investigation of crimes in the country. Public enforcement of the Law in Samoa and any other Law that confers functions, powers and responsibilities in the police service, to all or some of its members. Maintenance of peace between regional or international, international peace keeping missions.

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This Ministry is the 3rd largest Ministry of Government. Within police services itself, there are many divisions that are able to provide different services for the public. These divisions have the following offices, the Commissioner's office, Support Management, Behavior Monitoring Unit, professional standards unit, legal advisors, internal auditors, general services in Upolu and to Savaii. Filing unit, dog management unit, partnership unit, forensic unit, domestic violence unit, records and exhibits unit, intelligence unit, maritime unit.

Communication unit, traffic, firearm, finance, assets, information technology, human resources, training unit, policy and planning unit. The major developments that were carried out, not only the usual work of the Ministry already annually planned, not only responding to the problems of the public, investigating crimes and presenting criminal cases to the court, but also protecting and maintaining the safety of the country during busy periods or when hosting. Always deal with Ministries as there are tasks that are usually carried out.

These duties include 24 hours of work, confirmation of Independence each year, Teuila, work during festive season such as Christmas and New Year. Not only with the works that are conducted annually, but it is also noted some of the major developments faced by the Ministry utilizing the staff like in 2016, the security of the country's elections that year. Conferences, green climate funding. In 2017, International rugby tournament. Special Ceremony for the swearing in of the Head of State of Samoa, Afioga Tuimalealiifano Vaaletoa Sualauvi II, 21st July 2017. Pacific Island Leaders Forum, visitation of the Prime Minister of New Zealand to Samoa, Super Rugby match between Queensland Red and the Auckland Blues. Visitation of the Governor of Australia.

In 2018 work was carried out during the time of Cyclone Gita. The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinta Ardern visited Samoa. The matter that arose with the roadblock at Luatuanuu. State funeral of the Member of Council of Deputies, Honorable Tuiloma Pule Lameko. Problems that arose from the market in Salelologa and Salelavalu. International Rugby match between Samoa and Germany.

In 2019, was the 16th Pacific Games. The Prince of Norway visited Samoa. Visitation by the President of the Church of the Latter-day Saints. Pacific Chief Justice Conference, International Rugby tournament, Meeting for Agricultural Ministers of Asia, Caribbean and the Pacific. Conference of Ministers of the Pacific Region Energy & Transport. 2019 in the month of June the Nafanua was sent back to Australia after 30 years of serving Samoa in the maritime sector.

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In the month of October in the same year the crew and Nafanua 2 had returned for the continuation of the work for the protection of the coast of the Pacific from illegal fishing, especially the transportation of drugs and others such as trans-national crime. Start of a special program using a plane to monitor the coasts of the Pacific from illegal fishing by some, area surveillance program...

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai (Salega East): Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pardon me Hon Minister, while I give opportunity, is there something the respectable member wishes to speak upon?

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Mr Speaker, there was only one member who questioned this Ministry, it was just Hon Laauli. No one else. So I do not know what I am to respond to.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pardon me Hon Minister as I call upon Tofa Olo.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Perhaps the Hon Minister missed that I talked about the security of the country, I believe this is his responsibilities.

However, I rise with respect because the Hon Minister is about to move away from the subject of forensics of the Ministry. It is nothing big, it is just a small matter. But Mr Speaker, there has been a discovery of dead bodies at the hospital, probably 14 to 18. And the information given is they are currently awaiting police investigations into these matters. I just want to ask, let me finish Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have noted the interruption. What you are stating is not related to the subject of national security of the country.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker, it is alleged that the police are delaying their investigation with the deceased bodies. But my only advice, because most of the cases there, have been given final decision of the Court, but still bodies of the family deceased members are still there. Perhaps hand it over to have a burial if... and what is the approach by the Ministry of Police on such matters.

Another aspect, usually a dead body is only allowed to be left there for 72 hours, also the Hon Minister has mentioned the Nafanua, has it been fixed now the Nafanua that had been damaged? Well, that is my second question. With respect.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I call upon the Hon Minister.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Well, I will respond because of my respect yet he did not speak on it. The deceased bodies that are at the hospital is not a responsibility of ...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister it is only relevant that you continue on the subject of the Nafanua. The situation with the deceased bodies, I believe you do not have to respond to it since it was not questioned in the first place. But there was a query on the national security of the vessel Nafanua. That is the only interjection you should answer Hon Minister, others, no.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker, this subject is important for the hospital where these dead bodies are kept for the security of the country's health.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pardon me Tofa Olo, please sit down, sit down please.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: What, will we ignore it but how?

DEPUTY SPEAKER: An interruption is something you mentioned in your main speech. It did not include this. But this is why there is a delay, and our work is dragged along, because of these new ideas based on the clarification voiced by the Minister. There was no mention of it. Maybe you remembered what I said to you, on why your speech was short. There was no mention of this matter in the speech you gave. Therefore, I appease the member and I will not accept what you are trying to convey.

I call upon the Leader of the country.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, this is also not a subject of the Ministry of Police. This makes it more wrong. This is a subject matter of the Court. Because the Police cannot do anything until granted by the Court, the Judge owns the order.

Mr Speaker, the member is more wrong as he keeps falling asleep then suddenly, he stands up.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister.

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Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Well, thank you Mr Speaker. Nafanua has a problem at the moment, it is a little one, the part has been brought from Australia now, maybe after next week the vessel would be up and running, it is not a huge part that is broken. These vessels, the Tongan vessel is currently being towed to Australia, defective. The only defect is the year of the vessel, but it is covered by the warranty, it will land here next week and will operate later on.

Start of a special program that uses a aircraft to monitor the coasts of Pacific countries from illegal fishing by some. And Samoa is one of the two countries in the Pacific where the other plane is based for this program. This program is funded by the Australian Government.

Traffic matters under the Authority of Land Transport has been transferred under the Ministry of Police 2020. Also, the merger of the Ministry of Prisons and the Ministry of Police. Delegating the responsibilities for vehicle licensing and issuing drivers licenses from the Land Transport Authority (LTA). Number of employees. In 2015 there were 665 workers, but in 2020, there are 703 workers.

In other words, Mr Speaker, it has been 5 years but only 38 additional staff. It is a situation where the staff is severely understaffed. The reason why there is a small number of additional staff is because some resigned, where there is 5 years with only 38, 703 and 665 workers from 2016.

Revenue from services rendered, revenue collection. The Ministry of Police has also noticed the increase in revenue from services provided. 2016/2017 the budget was \$353,160, the total amount received was \$524, 145. The surplus was \$170,985. 2017/2018- \$353,160 was the estimated expenditure. Revenue collected \$427,528, with a surplus of \$74,368. 2018/2019 \$353,160 estimated expenditure, revenue collected was \$427,053. A surplus of \$118,823.

In the year 2019/2020, \$622,705 was the estimated revenue collected, however \$1,008,310 was the total collected. The surplus was \$385,605. The current fiscal year, fiscal year 2021. In the first 6 months of this year, the estimated expenditure for the entire year ending June 30th, 2021, is \$15,059,086. By the end of the year for 6 months, the amount that could be collected was \$7,795,293.77. This \$7 million was collected within 6 months from July to December of last year.

Criminal records. Topics centered on investigations. 2017 there was 3,448. Police assistance was 5,664, a total of 9,012. 2018, cases investigated 4,739, police assistance 9,212. Total 13,951. 2019 cases carried out investigations 527... police assistance 9,337, with a total 14,615. 2020, investigations, 5549, police assistance 12,698.

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These cases are reported to the Police Department. This happens to most households, when a youth disrupts peace, they call the Police Department. To the general public, police cells, are not cells for drunkards to sleep in, these are cells to keep those who create conflict and abuse people. When your children get drunk, and you call the Police. Please, calm down your child, these are not police who tend to drunkards, they are police officers' protection the country. That is why there are many other accidents that should not have been reported to the Police Station. As indicated, there have been an increase on the number of cases in which the Ministry responds to, due to certain incidents from the general public.

And with this data the Ministry is able to put together some plans to try and implement partnership projects with Government Ministries, private businesses and foreign partners in order to reduce the problems caused by these crimes, especially the issues the local community is involved in between the people of our own country.

It is also noted that the Ministry continues to increase its efforts to prepare the entire staff for the provision of police services for Samoa and its people, as there are some areas that have improved. Improve staff training in various legal issues. Investigating crimes and especially obtaining different skills. Increase the skills of teachers especially the assessment and acceptance by the Samoa Qualifications Authority of trainings the staff are being taught. Using modern technology, quorums, local tracking system GPS, CCTV.

Establish a central office for the analysis of information on international crimes, Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Unit. Training in some police techniques to respond to riots and raids in the rural areas. Increase the totality of the Administration to support the Commissioner to carry out duties of monitoring the activities of the Ministry as a whole.

Police Outposts in Upolu and Savaii so that it is easier for the general public to communicate with the service of the Ministry. This has led to the establishment of more rural Police Outposts in rural villages in Upolu and Savaii. These offices are separate from the Main Police Station in Apia in Upolu are, Station in Tuanaimato in Faleata, Afega, Faleolo, Lotofaga, Poutasi, Lalomanu and the Land Transport Office in Fagalii and Vaitele.

In Savaii, the Police Outpost in Tuasivi, Police Outpost in Fagamalo, Police Outpost in Asau, Police Outpost in Vaitoomuli, and Land Transport Office in Salelologa. Therefore, the Office will be moved from Tuasivi to be set up in Salelologa where the town is located. This work should start this year with the burying of 4 acres of land, for the construction of the Office of the Ministry of Police.

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Some of the Ministry's partnership projects are ongoing with the Australian Government. This includes the project, Samoa Australian Police Partnership, together with the project for the Maritime. This includes participation of representatives from Australia, Australian Defense Force. Not only do representatives from Australia work in the main office in Apia for consultations, but it has also been easy to facilitate the release of some assistance, through tools for the implementation of police work.

It also records many of these grants such as the donation of musical instruments, for the promotion of the service of the musical group.

The donation of vehicles, buses, motorcycle, as the other motorcycle was hit by an old man during preparations for the Pacific Games. As for the Government of China it is the Police Academy. The work was planned to start in March last year, but due to the global impact of Covid-19, it is now being put on hold until a later time. This big project will enable the sons and daughters of Samoa who want to serve the country through police and prison work, to reside and learn in the Academy. This Academy will be built in Tafaigata where the old prison used to be, with the support of the Chinese Government.

The Ministry has also confirmed the continuous support of this Government, with the donation of musical instruments for the promotion of the service of the musical group. There were also trainings carried out in America last year in November and December, this training is important. For the improvement of the knowledge for those who work in the unit that responds to serious issues, as well as providing tools to equip workers. This great assistance is from the American Government, and it is expected to continue into the future.

As for New Zealand. For clarification of our distinguished Parliament, our partnership with the Government of New Zealand is still continuing in terms of consultant, just like one of the projects that was conducted by the Police Office in New Zealand, in reviewing the structure of the Ministry of Police, Organizational structure carried out in 2019. This structure has greatly assisted in making the work easy with putting together of police services and prison services. Other partnerships, the Ministry is still continuing with its other partnerships with some private businesses in Samoa, as well as some from overseas, centered on trying to reduce crimes that arise within our country.

Conclusion. I would like to conclude my address with the Commissioner and the Administration of the Ministry of Police and Prison and Corrections as it is now. There is belief that there are several good works that been achieved. However, there are thoughts as well, of several other developments that have been planned for the improvement of services. Such as other major projects the Ministry are trying to complete, like the completion of the prison in Vaiaata.

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The implementation and improvement of transport services at Fagalii. Installation of special lines for improvement of communication with the prison at Tanumalala, the fibre object.

The restoration of roads in Aleisa towards the prison. Establishment of the Main Police Office at Salelologa, installation of ticket meters for parking in Apia in front of the Government building. The project for safekeeping of records of the Ministry, archive and storage project. Alarms for Tanumalala, multipurpose hall for prisoners.

Not only for these major projects but also in sustaining quality services of the Ministry given to the general public. This is done through investigating unlawful matters. Improve on quickly responding to subjects regarding assistance. Improve record keeping on daily work carried out, upgrade rehabilitation programs for men and women prisoners. In order to reduce the number of prisoners returning to prison, reduce offending. Ensure honesty and integrity in conducting services without being biased, or racist in accordance with the oath.

We are nearing the end of our journey, and no work carried out has been implemented without any difficulties. But whatever challenges, and especially a service that have not been satisfied as you wish. I believe, occurrences that happen is a lesson to improve services that is given to Samoa.

To Samoa listening in as well as dignified members of Parliament, I wish to conclude an address with some of the developments carried out by the Ministry of Police, Prisons and Corrections Services as follow. I want to thank the first Commissioner of Prisons and Corrections, Afioga Taito Saua Winterstein who carried out the duty of Commissioner, from the year 2014 until the beginning of 2020. Not only that, but the Administration who have also completed their duties and have proceeded to other roles. This includes, Ulugia Sauafea Niua Aumua, as well as Levaopolo Rosa Siaosi Soalo- Deputy Commissioner. They are the ones who went through trials, until the relocation of the prison up at Tanumalala. I commend you all for your patience, thank you for responding to the requests of the Government, through me and the Associate Minister. May the Lord bless you all with your new appointments.

Least I cannot forget a special thanks to the Commissioner of Prison and Corrections, Afioga Fuiavailili Egon Keil, standing at the helm and leading this Ministry. This is not an easy task, but I believe your leadership and encouragement of your staff, has improved the Ministry, on another level which is a result of these great changes. I acknowledge your bravery. I believe you are not afraid to do what is right, even with our family members you would lock them up in cells.

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Thank you for supporting me, and the Associate Minister with our duties and responsibilities, within this Ministry. Well done and thank you to the Assistants for supporting the Commissioner with carrying out his duties, as well as pushing the workers to do the work to the best of their abilities. I thank all the staff carrying out police services, prison services, as well as the traffic services. I commend you all for the effort, you have good things, this is not to praise an individual, but it is praise returned to the Lord who owns all strength.

A special thanks to the respects of Samoa, those who are serving their sentences in prison at Tanumalala, Oloamanu and Vaiaata. You are never forgotten in our prayers, because we are all Samoans. We are founded in God with everything, God is also the one that cleanses our sins and wrongdoings. The holy blood of our Savior is the greatest forgiveness. Whatever rock you threw, not only with the development of agricultural work to care for those imprisoned, as well as projects of the Government designed for programs, to restore life from temptations of this life. Take serving their time in prison as an opportunity for change, for the development of families, and children for a better future, especially the future benefit of all Samoa. There is an opinion not all endeavors end in success. And not everyone is perfect. If there has been any rude behavior portrayed to Samoa listening, I trust in your judgement. I pray the Lord be kind to the Commissioner and the Management of the Ministry of Police and Prison and Corrections. May the Lord guide the staff working day and night in upholding the safety, and at times when there are drunks on the road. We go home and rest, yet you are still working. God bless.

Mr Speaker, I will start off with a statement on our working relation with the Ministry of Customs and Revenue from 2016 until this final year.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pardon me Hon Minister, take a breather, while I give fortuity to the Leader of the House.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, before the Minister moves away from the Ministry of Police, perhaps this is an opportunity for me to add on to matters mentioned, so that the continuation of the speech by the Hon Minister is clear, together with statement heard that these will not happen, which should be corrected.

The Hon Minister have clearly explained the Police Academy. This Police Academy have long been discussed. The Government have been discussing where to establish it, but it was long conversed with the Government of China to be built using grant with the idea that there should be an Academy.

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Negotiations were carried out, and then we came to a conclusion, that it will be setup at Tafaigata. A blueprint was provided, and we saw the design and where exactly it will be located. All the work had been laid out and ready to be implemented however Covid-19 struck. There was expectation that these plans would be carried out in the month of May this year, as it was planned from back then.

The design of the Academy building is beautiful, and behind it there is a huge field for trainings and exercise. Because this is a huge part of the trainings as police officers is fitness, as they have to be strong. Therefore, behind it there is the huge field, which have been measured, and fenced. If you travel towards Tafaigata at the exact area at the front it has already been fenced all around. It has already been reclaimed as well for setting up this Academy. However, since the rise of Covid-19, well perhaps it will not be long, before the vaccines arrive. After the administering of vaccine there might be adjustment made in relation to flights.

Mr Speaker this is important, as I clearly mentioned it the morning of the opening of the Primary School at Tafaigata. There is hope that there is enough space to establish another College there so that all children are able to attend, those residing at Tafaigata towards Faleula-uta, and other close villages.

It is wonderful to see children of people residing in that area walk to school in the morning. It has also been arranged that the old prison building will be renovated, to set up a special school for trade related subjects. I touched upon this matter the morning I was there to open it. I stood up there facing the sea, and I could see the sea below with the breeze blowing. It was full of people and most of the students there are attending the school. They are able to walk without trying to catch a ride to go far away. This is a great decision made on the relocation of the prison from Tafaigata up to Tanumalala.

Mr Speaker and the dignified House, I cannot recall how many times it has been announced, by those publishing these false statements, that this will not happen. Again, we are hearing it, let us stop these false rumors, which may cause speculation. This is trustworthy, it is true. Especially when there are people who have seen it, it has been cleared. I hope that borders will be opened very soon, and these developments will be implemented.

Mr Speaker, the importance stance of this crucial decision, is taking away of the prison, why? It is based on future perception of the Government noting it includes the main road Vaitele tai all the way inland Vaitele uta. This will be part of the capital in the future. However, with the increasing number of people residing in this area together with young children, this is why Mr Speaker there was a thought by Cabinet especially the Minister, to pursue this development, to relocate the prison to Tanumalala. Why?

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It is inappropriate for a prison to be situated in a residential area which would later become a part of Apia. It is not reasonable to have a prison at the center where a lot of people live. If prisoners escape, there is a huge impact on families that are close. This is the foresight of the Government on protection. But with the relocation, it is an important decision, why? Because it is expensive, we had to find overseas assistance, however, it seemed our partners were reluctant because of such statements. This should be done by the Government alone, but it is the bravery and determination of the Minister that made it possible to implement this plan, bravery and perseverance. Even though it was brought into the Parliament and was attacked, and criticized, attacked and criticized. Even in Cabinet, this was the same thought, the freedom of Ministers to voice their thoughts openly in Cabinet to open conversation and discuss ideas.

But it is the decision made by Cabinet that is carried out. To repeal this idea voiced, by one member who was in Cabinet, meaning Cabinet is not important. I am surprised, with someone who sat in Cabinet and observed how policies were implemented. Then come out of Cabinet and say such remarks, thus Cabinet is sitting here. In the process of discussing this matter, I do not recall how many times it was attacked, which was a challenge. It is an open discussion, to voice opinions that are not in agreement, this is a challenge for the Minister to stimulate the mind.

Mr Speaker, what has happened? The prison is now relocated at Tanumalala, but what had happened? The new prison is quite big as well as the state it is in right now. But what happened there? This is another thing, safety is guaranteed, the decision made was right of placing the prison further inland. It has become a great challenge; it takes a brave prisoner to break out at this time. Why? It is circled by several plantations, and these plantations will be hard for prisoners to pass by. Perhaps the police would arrive later, but the prisoners have already been injured within these plantations trying to pass through it. Why? These plantations are guarded well. These are plantations of the livestock farmers, and beyond it are several villages. These villages are well managed by the chiefs and orators. Like the incident that occurred recently, the young men of the village captured some prisoners in the central area, thus inland is very dense. This ended up with four prisoners who escaped finding refuge at a Pastor's house in Lefaga kneeling before him for some food. The area in my opinion is well secured and safe for our police officers. It is easier as well for the police to monitor with the speed of vehicles. To guard all roads, all the way to Aleisa, towards the straight road and fork lanes at Leulumoega. It is very difficult especially for the huge number of escapees that fled, it is very difficult for convicts to break out. The location we have now is very much appropriate.

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Mr Speaker, there is an importance stance for the relocation of the Police Academy from Tuasivi. It should be situated in the capital at Salelologa. Come a time there will be some changes for the relocation of the hospital as well, as it should also be situated in the town area. Why? It would be convenient for the people both residing on the east and west side.

For everyone to come to the town in Salelologa, which is easier for people at Salafai. Rather than now, if people came from the other side, they would come around Salelologa, then catch another bus to travel to Tuasivi. It is like Apia, if the hospital had stood at Toamua, what would happen to the people travelling from the East, from Aleipata. That means they would come around Apia and then catch another ride to the other side to get to the hospital. These are locations implemented in the past, but it is not appropriate at this time, with the flow of travel and transportation for the people in Salafai.

Mr Speaker, the foresight of planning these things was not taken lightly, which resulted to the setup of the town in Salelologa. This town was not built at a small cost, and the foresight, on where a town should be officially situated for Salelologa. This is the entry and exit door for our people from Salafai.

Mr Speaker, this is the reason for taking the floor so that the Minister can take a break while I add on, because behind these plans are policies. Policies on foresight to make it easier for our people, to protect the lives of our people moving into the future. Behind this are policies, organized policies and long-term plans, well planned for the future. Mr Speaker this is further clarification on the matter before the Minister moves away from the Ministry of Police.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, I commend the Hon Leader of the Government for the statement. I note that the member of the constituency of Palauli le Falefa is upstanding. I give you the opportunity.

Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga (Palauli le Falefa): Thank you Mr Speaker. The subject I raised was the increase of job opportunities for the children of Samoa in the future. This is one matter that was clarified in the speech of the Hon Prime Minister, the Police Academy. The reason why I mention this, is because it will improve police knowledge and other different skills. Also, the reason why this is important to me Mr Speaker, is that it will provide opportunities to increase the number of police officers going on peace keeping missions, because this is one additional contributor to our country's income from foreign reserves.

In this part I thank the Hon Minister, the Associate Minister, the Police Commissioner and the Ministry. With respect. Thank you.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I call upon the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, I commend the matter brought forth by the member of Palauli le Falefa for our overseas missions. It was not easy; we first went in the year 2000 after my meeting with the Secretary General of the United Nations.

I have already stood up to give my speech in 1999 to the United Nations, and we have already planned a meeting then I went and met them, then I made a request. I have seen that they have done a lot of peace works, therefore I presented 3 matters to the Secretary General. The first matter is to formally thank them for their peace works.

The second matter, I mentioned that we will increase our participation in the United Nations, reflecting the Governments support for the United Nations activities for peace. Our participation will increase by 5%. I asked Susuga Aiono whom we went and Secretary of Foreign Affairs on how much was Samoa's participation, he stated it is 8,000. This is why I am confident. It was increased to 50 from 8,000 to 12,000. The General Secretary was happy, the African who was there. Then he asked what is the third? The third matter, in regard to the support of Samoa to the work of the United Nations. I have noticed that there are soldiers coming from other countries. But for us we do not have soldiers we only have police, is it possible to lend a shoulder with the participation of our police. He responded alright; we will do so. Perhaps it was the next year when an announcement was given for the first recruits, going over to East Timor, at that time there was conflict there as they were preparing for Independence, there was dispute with Indonesia who ruled over them.

Announcement was made and about twenty of our police were sent. I remember one of the members of the Opposition, he stood up from there and said, I feel sorry for the sons of Samoa taken to be killed overseas. Meaning that they will be used to pay for Samoa's loans, debts. Such statements are trivial. But something happened, some policemen were scared to go. So, for the 20 that went, when they came back, those who were scared to go saw that they bought cars, built houses and also buy lands.

Another announcement was made needing about twenty, but the number of requests went up to 100+. But where did this idea of scaring people come from? It was from Parliament. This is exactly the action implemented by this group.

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Mr Speaker, what is the situation now? Now we have the opportunity to go overseas. I had recently signed another paper to return some of our people who are in Africa, now affected with Covid-19. But we still have police work overseas. Mr Speaker, this is the matter, however there is still a strong presence of deception, but these are works that benefit families.

I conclude a statement on the matter of deception, there is a playground for the young children, and it is almost complete, built for one constituency through ties with China, for free. There is also the big building in Malifa if you travel past it, going uphill on your left side. That huge building is also for free, to store our valued artifacts, also included in this, are the workers, as well as the Covid-19 situation. So there, at this building, the playgrounds at the back and the one behind our college, those are all the things we were given, but cannot be built, China has no more money, and nothing left.

Mr Speaker, it is outstanding for a person to be rich with lies. After one thing, another is destroyed, yet this is the essence of our Proceedings, to provide facts. It is only here that provides facts. The announcements made outside of this Parliament, are things not approved.

Mr Speaker that is further clarification.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will give the opportunity to Afioga Tuiatua Faanofonofu as this is one of the matters mentioned in his address. You may speak.

Afioga Tafua Maluelue Tafua (Aleipata Itupa i Lalo): Thank you Mr Speaker. I also thank the Hon Minister of Police; I commend you for your efforts and diligence. There are a lot of good work carried out by yourself. But I just want to add on to the statement by the Prime Minister mentioning our police. This is one development that has garnered a lot of income for our country. I believe I travelled to New York four times on a trip of the Prime Minister and met one policeman who used to work here as a security. But he was from my constituency.

I did not know; we went out the other night and he said he is from Aleipata. He was a security here, but he sat an exam and was able to get a post at the United Nations, I asked him where he lives but he said Sudan, he is from that part of the world. He was there as a police office, because during these big meetings of Government in New York, it includes all countries nearly 200 in the world. This is where all peace keeping officers come to guard the United Nations Assembly.

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The Prime Minister also mentioned the matter, for clarification, this house is smaller, perhaps it is four times bigger than this one. All Leaders, Presidents, Prime Ministers of each country take turns to speak, but this is a great development for our country, not only do we get assistance as stated by the Prime Minister, but also, we earn a lot from it.

Mr Speaker, I took the floor, because of the importance of our plans which I mentioned. I mentioned in my speech the academy not long ago, the police academy. I remember I spoke on it last year, with hope of requesting the Minister to set up this police academy and to cover other areas police, fire fighters and police officers who want to travel abroad as international security. Not only that but local security officers here, working as securities in the country. This would be great to upgrade the standard of security for the country. Also, it will be easier for them to find employment, because when they graduate from the police academy, they have the opportunity to pursue firefighting, and pursue work other police work within the country as well as overseas.

Another aspect Mr Speaker, is the state of the Ministry of Police, I add on with respect a word of thanks to the Hon Minister, the Hon Prime Minister has already spoke upon it, and my word is not more significant. But our side is obligated to emphasize. A spirit of gratitude, because for us, nothing can be done by the Ministry if there is no assistance of our customs and traditions, discipline, good manners and the determination to keep the peace.

However, there was something mentioned by your Hon, you requested, that the police office is not a place you call when there are drunk youths. In my mind, it seems, with respect, it is like a two-sided sword, and the reason is, if a mother of four young adults aged 20+ calls police because she could not stop one from misbehaving, it is easier to maintain peace in rural villages through the council of alii and faipule, but in Apia,

I request that it is best for the Ministry to visit and calm down this youth. This is part of upholding peace. Maintaining peace is when you visit the home and the mother and children and find that it is hard for them to calm down the eldest son, it is best to let him sleep in the cell, because not only will it protect him from getting injury but also the mother and children. This is just an example. That is a suggestion Hon Minister. The Ministry should not give in easily, no it is also important.

On another note, Mr Speaker, if nothing is done, people will complain, if it is done as well, people will also complain. This is what I meant with a two-sided sword. If something is done others will complain, if it not done, the others will complain as well. This is a statement with respect, but this is my advice on this matter. With respect.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The member of Faleata is there... Well, speak.

Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi (Faleata West): Mr Speaker there was just a small part I mentioned in my speech, I was waiting on whether the Hon Minister will speak on it. First this constituency wants to convey its thanks for the good work carried out, especially with services now merged together for Corrections and Police. This is important, because before, when prisoners escape police have to go find them. But now there is a close communication between the two. Thank you. As for what I mentioned, something that has arisen, is the challenge faced by the Police Office, of new crimes, what we were not used to, like cybercrime, criminal activity and using of internet, and other things such as drugs, heavy drugs this is what we are seeing.

This is why I gave advice the Hon Minister, it is crucial to upgrade trainings for police officers. This is the exact area as we cannot ignore it anymore. I spoke with one of the members that attends our Sitting Salai, something happened two weeks ago, I am not sure if the Deputy Speaker is aware, but we were removed together with another member from overseas broadcast, aired on American radio what was done... but it was not, it did not happen.

It was announced to these people and regarded as facts, these are actual things reported from Samoa and aired on radio, a photo was taken...but the good thing about this, is we have found who did it here. I spoke with the Hon Minister and the Head of Police to find them. Now we know where this person lives and will be taught a lesson. This is also good for those doing such things to listen in to our warning.

But I want to convey my opinion of this group, and the importance of this group for the Police Department, not only are they like a team, like an IT Team or a SWAT team or similar to a team that investigates matters related to drugs and such things, which is another direction. But thankfully there are plans underway for the implementation of an academy for all these things. Thus, I want to convey my gratitude again to the Hon Minister and your Ministry. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: When there are many stories made regarding the Ministry of Police, we never stop wanting to hear them. The Chair would also like to give an opinion regarding this academy, because I was present at the beginning of the creation of the purpose and policies as stated by the Leader of Government. The hope in the future is to make Samoa a center of the Ministry of Police here, where police forces from Niue, Tokelau and Vanuatu will come. All these things were included, for them to come over and receive training here.

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This is one of the major things addressed in the statement, which is something I really enjoy hearing when the Police Academy is discussed, it is the best thing ever.

Therefore, thank you to the Hon Minister, we are listening, it should commence right away. I really want to see it, yes. But I ask the Hon Minister to continue your speech, just these few things, also you have already expressed your appreciation to Fuiavailiili Egon Keil and his staff. But these are some minor issues that were mentioned before we move to the Customs Office.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Thank you Mr Speaker. Thank you also to fellow members for the interventions and recommendations given.

When information is received about a disturbance within a family caused by drunkards, the Ministry will not hesitate, as they will be taken to the Ministry and indicted straight away. Then in the morning the mother will come and make a plea to the Commission, to please drop the charges. They are indicted for causing disturbance at home, so the police have no choice but to prosecute. That is the meaning of the statement, to call the Police in the night to take them away but in the morning when they are informed that he has been convicted; the mother would then come to make a plea in tears. However, they have been prosecuted by the police so it cannot be discarded.

The matter regarding narcotics, I believe that investigations are not easy, but the Ministry still continues to investigate. Just the collection of illegal drugs that were confiscated last year, well, this is the cooperation of the Ministry of Customs and the Police Department.

In regard to cyber-crime, I believe that once the ongoing police academy is completed, there will probably be a unit to study it, but it will also be dependent on the Ministry of Communications and other methods using the internet to help with the investigation. But our Ministry is also working on it. The commencement of the Police Academy, we are waiting for the time to bring workers from China. I went to the Embassy the day before yesterday, perhaps after the election and then we will try to bring them over, because there is a lot of work awaiting them, but the two Governments should look for a way to bring these people over.

The work for the prison in Vaiaata, well, the challenge that will be given to the Commissioner and the Afioga Sagaga, make sure this work is inaugurated on the 19th of March, next month. What is good for Upolu is also good for Savaii. This work has made me suffer immensely.

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But thanks to the love of God for its completion. Well, whatever statements that were made towards me and the accusations for the construction of this prison, and even though I am not from Savaii, but I am the Minister for Upolu and Savaii. Furthermore, I cannot just build a beautiful prison here in Upolu while the homes of our people residing in Savaii are in poor condition. And this prison also produces food, which is a crucial aid for Tanumalala. It is also beneficial for the budget of the Ministry of Finance and the funds that are given for food supplies.

Thank you to the Commissioner, especially Susuga Sagaga who is in charge of large prison farm of 417 acres which has plenty of taro and bananas and we would export them immediately if it was possible, but the priority is given to the prisons for its food supplies. Well, for our prison, the Government will prepare on Friday 19th for the opening of our prison, and it will not change.

Well, I will start with a statement on the relationship I had with the Ministry of Customs and Revenue.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I give the opportunity to the Hon Leader of the House.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, there is just one issue, there are important aspects because not long ago they came to me for some advice, because it has manifested that there are citizens of the country who have made charges against the alii and faipule in regard to the foul language uttered in the Assembly.

We had discussions on this issue, and it is an important issue that should be well understood by the police, as well as the Police Commissioner, in regard to cultural traditions. When a village conducts its meetings on whatever conditions whether it is a general meeting, or the meeting of mayors, there are always serious issues that arise, especially a rebellious son, and then they are brought to receive the penalty as well as discipline. This is the discipline, whether it is an untitled man or another matai well, these are normal circumstances, since the village council encourages the usage of the language and its properties. When it gets to the point where these words and sayings are used to reprimand a matai, or an untitled man, for someone who is new or have just been bestowed a matai title, they feel intimidated from just the words because this portrays the strength of the village with the instructions given.

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For foreign countries like the United States, the most severe punishment is to place you in a room where they end your life by electrocution. In other countries, they use.... excuse my language, they use ropes to hang people, capital punishment.

For us, well, I think it was in 2004 when I submitted a letter to the Cabinet to end capital punishment in Samoa, so that we are in line with the state that the world is heading towards. This is not a way to stop murder. There are other ways, as this penalty has been in our Law books for a long time, but the standard decision is the death penalty. But there is no death penalty in Samoa, and then I come to life-imprisonment. The point of bringing up this matter, in regard to the capital punishment. In the days of Rome, the Roman punishment for a person who has received the death penalty, they are crucified on the cross. For the non-Romans, this was the most heinous punishment during the Roman rule, crucifying of a person on the cross, just like the one that was used to crucify our Lord. But for the punishment of Roman citizens, a sword is used.

That is the reason why our Lord was crucified, and Peter was also crucified, but a sword was used for Paul's punishment, because he was a Roman citizen. Even to this day the pillar, which is about 3 feet tall, is still standing in Rome as it is still being preserved, this is where they placed his head, and the sword was used to separate his head from his body. The punishments were different. A sword is also used by the Arabs. But when it comes to Samoan punishments, words are used. The power of the word can make a guilty person tremble. That is where this proverb originated from, *a oo loa ina malosi le agi mai o le lauga a le togisala, ona e iloa loa lea ua lata mai le malu*. Because that is the way this country makes its decisions, words that are used to reprimand you are quite harsh, but apart from the decision, you are forgiven, or your punishment has been revoked.

These are our characteristics; we use words, like a double-edged sword. For that reason, if the guilty person is unfamiliar with these things, he would tremble uncontrollable by the words when it is their turn, and then he starts thinking that he will be prosecuted by the Law. That is the issue that we were talking about, since those are the circumstances, we should be wary of, because the customs and traditions of Samoa, has its own laws that we should be cautious about. So, for the matai's who are unfamiliar with these conditions, that is what you can expect.

That was the purpose of our meeting, as the police Laws should not interfere with the circumstances of our Samoan customs and traditions, because this is how the peace is maintained within the villages, to suppress unrest and chaos, but the power is similar to a double-edged sword, the word. The words are used to reprimand a person that causes unrest within the village.

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Mr Speaker, this is a very important issue that has been raised, because these characteristics are very important for those new matai's who attend the village fono and upon hearing this situation, they would carelessly suggest external remedies, but they forget, that these are the customs and values of Samoa through which strengthens the authority of the village council.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I commend the Hon Leader of Government for the statement. The country has listened. Therefore, the Chair has no intention of making any further remarks on the significance of your statement, as the importance given to our customs and traditions has been fully understood, to live peacefully in assisting the Ministry and its mission.

I call on the Hon Minister to continue your speech.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Thank you Mr Speaker. Well, the Ministry of Revenue, perhaps this is one of the most important Ministries in the management of the economy of our country, especially with the ongoing work. In the words of the Bible, after good work has been done, you say "Lord, we are useless servants." It is with such a feeling that I would like to make a statement about the good work that have been carried out and achieved by this Ministry, especially the many challenges they faced, while we were managing the work of the Government within these 5 years now coming to an end. And it makes me feel warm, humble and especially grateful to the God Almighty for His love and protection which made it possible for us to gather here, and to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Ministry and our Government, especially for all the citizens of Samoa.

The Ministry has 3 main tasks, as you are all aware. 1. The collection of the Government's revenues from various taxes and duties on goods imported into Samoa. As well as business licenses, customs licenses and alcohol production licenses.

2. Processing the clearance of goods for immigrants coming into Samoa. 3. The protection of our international borders from importing into Samoa goods, weapons and illegal drugs. These duties and responsibilities are tightly wrapped in the main goals and the vision of the Ministry. As written in its Corporate Plans 2017-2022. The long-term plans and the service guidelines. It is prioritized in these long-term plans the focus of the Ministry in working together for a safe and prosperous Samoa. And its missions, the sustainability of the developments of Samoa through the efficient collection of our income. To increase compliance with the Law and a strong protection on border.

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The desire of the Ministry for the future, its future aspiration. It states that its partners can fulfil their obligations of the Law with voluntary compliance. And to facilitate the assistance of the Ministry. To increase the awareness of all citizens, that paying taxes and duties is their biggest contribution for the country as a whole. The Government has been convinced of the perfect condition with the proper administration of trade in the country. This includes the proper management and security of tax and duty records and information. To let the villages and communities know about the importance of good security for their international borders in their daily lives. The villages and communities should be informed that there are appropriate and legal provisions to pursue those who do not comply with the Law. The villages and communities need to be reassured that the staff of the Ministry has enough skills, knowledge, honesty and a helpful spirit in carrying out their duties. And to recognize internationally the appropriate legal methods that manage trade and strengthen the protection of international borders.

In order to achieve all these visions and its mission, the Ministry has established 5 private guidelines for the responsibilities...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I interrupt the speech of the Hon Minister of Revenue and the Minister of Police and Prisons, since we have now arrived at the time for our usual recess.

I announce with respect, that the Work of the House will be set aside for its usual recess.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly were set aside for its usual recess at 7:46pm until 8:37pm.

Debates continued with Government Responses on the second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I announce that the Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly have resumed.

It is believed that everything has been satisfactory as the sanctity of Parliament has just finished having its evening meal. We have also restored strength to continue our work this evening. Well, I want to applaud your patience and perseverance.

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Before the Work of the House was set aside the Hon Minister for Revenue and the Minister of Police, Prison and Correction Services was speaking.

Therefore, I respectfully call upon the Hon Minister to continue his speech.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Thank you Mr Speaker. These are the 5 private guidelines of this Ministry. Provide good services with our partners and also managing compliance with the Law. To reform revenue collection through modern ways. Good trade management and international border protection. Effective management of ongoing investigations and enforcement of Laws. Improve the labor resources and qualifications, in order to increase the professional skills and leadership skills of the staff. That is the framework of good leadership and good governance. The Ministry is in charge of carrying out its duties and responsibilities. It will be done with integrity, values for good services and honesty. Impartial, complete, transparent, respectful, articulate and reliable.

These are some of the projects and achievements that were implemented within the 5 years of our affiliation. The fiscal year of July 2015 – June 2016. The estimated revenue for the fiscal year was \$483 million, but the Ministry collected \$485.1 million. And we recorded a surplus of \$21.1 million of about 100.1% collected. 65% was collected by the Customs Office, 34% was collected by the Revenue Office. But 1% was collected from non-tax revenues.

As you are aware, this Parliamentary Term started in April 2016 after the election, and this is also the last half of the 2015/2016 financial year. This is also the first year since January 2016 that the Chief Executive Officer started working, and there was a concern that the long-term project plans might not be achieved, especially the necessary revenue collection plans because we were all new to our appointments.

However, we received the assistance from the Holy Spirit of God and his blessings, which strongly encouraged and guided our journey through the first financial year. There are no Bills introduced by the Ministry in the last half of that financial year, because there are only 3 months left before the financial year ended on the 30th June 2016. But we are only working diligently to continue the work and the estimates that have been established and approved for the financial year. We would like to acknowledge with gratitude a good and great end of the previous financial year, as the revenue collected by the Ministry over the last 4 to 5 years has been achieved and exceeded. The revenue that was planned to be collected was not achieved, however the total amount of revenue collected each year was recorded.

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It was not due to the negligence on the part of the Ministry and the Administration at the time, but there were many projects and long-term plans that were prepared and planned for improvement of future projects so to increase and develop the adherence of taxpayers with the Laws, especially their understanding of the provisions of the Act and their contribution. It is with the support services of the Ministry to further improve, transparent, impartial, and respectful and above all honesty for all people.

In the fiscal year 2016/2017, the revenue was \$491.7 million planned for the fiscal year but the Ministry collected \$501.3 million, resulting in a surplus of \$91.6 million, or 101% collected. 65% was collected by the Customs Office, 34% collected by the Tax Office, and 1% was collected from other services of the Ministry.

In that year, a high increase in revenue collected was recorded at about \$51.5 million, when compared to the revenue collected by the Ministry in the fiscal year 2015/2016. It is the same when compared to the past 5 years. Praises be to our God, for His help which made it possible to accomplish this work.

I am especially grateful for the response of the taxpayers, because the level of compliance with the provisions of the Laws has increased. Taxes are being paid within the time limit. Correct tax and duty information was given to the Ministry, especially coming in to register for tax and duty in their understanding. Because their awareness and understanding on the provisions of the Acts have increased. The services provided by the Ministry are good and transparent, especially with the clear recognition of their important contribution for the development of our country, through the payment of taxes and duties. Thank you very much.

The Act and amendments to the Act were passed. These good works were also achieved throughout the year, because these Acts govern this Ministry in that financial year. These are some of the changes in its Acts that were passed by the Parliament in 2016 to 2017. In 2017, the Parliament passed some major changes to the Taxation Act 2012, to remove the tax exemptions from the income of the pastors of any Church, as well as the income of the Head of State. With the readjustment under income tax, the income tax rate of employees and individual entrepreneurs, sole traders. The taxes for the pastors, I convey my thanks to the many pastors in all the Ministries in Samoa who are paying their taxes. There is not a single Church that does not pay taxes, but there are some who are not paying. Thank you.

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The essence of the Act and the arrangements of this tax are so that every person who earns money makes a contribution to the economy of Samoa. So, from the perspective of our foreign partners, our country is not dependent on the money of their workers, the taxes of their people, which are being donated for us. But now we are trying to make sure the entire country makes a contribution in the building of our economy through roads, hospitals, schools, water, electricity, patients taken over to New Zealand, dialysis hospitals, and many other works. These are the funds being used. The amount of tax-free income has increased from \$12,000 to \$15,000. The tax to be paid for the total amount of income between \$15,000 and \$25,000 has been increased to 20%. There has also been a 27% increase in the tax to be paid for the total income over \$25,000.

An Act was also passed to help businessmen in selling their products outside of Samoa, or exports. It will provide a relief of 50% in export tax credits on top of its income tax to be paid at the end of the year if it is certain and confirmed from the records, that 100% of the income has returned to Samoa, for the products they sell in foreign countries. This is a legal aid for exporters, for their income to be received in Samoa, instead of keeping it abroad.

The increase in the excise tax for cigarettes and spirits was also approved, with an addition of 3% as well as 5% and 20% on foods with a lot of fat and salt as well as food and drinks with a lot of sugar. This review was initiated as a result of an investigation by the Ministry of Health on foods and beverages that affect the health of the country, especially non-communicable diseases. It is true that it will affect the income, but these changes were approved for the good of the county. It is an effort to reduce the consumption of these products, when the tax on manufactured goods is raised, and increasing its prices, in order to reduce the number of people who consume it, and to reduce the number of people affected by these non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, high-blood pressure and cancer. This will decrease the Government's expenditures on the treatment of non-communicable diseases, especially the transportation of our patients overseas for treatments, due to the consumption of foods containing too much fat, salt, sugar as well as cigarettes and alcohol intake.

Not only in these areas, but the assessment was also carried out, and the cost of duty was reduced, as well as taxes for food that is encouraged for the consumption of our country, such as vegetables and fruits. It was also approved the increase in the cost of business licenses for companies and trustees increased from \$500 to \$800. Individual businesses and partnerships increased from \$202 to \$352, because the prices for these licenses have not been reviewed for years since 1998. Changes were approved for the capital gains tax in the Income Tax Act.

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The 3-year limit is set aside, but the 27% on the surplus is open and divided in 12 months, and after 12 months it is 10% on the surplus income from your assets to be sold.

A lot of preparations and announcements for all these changes were carried out in the beginning of the financial year, or the last 6 months of 2016 and the beginning of 2017, until they were presented and discussed in the Bills, until it was passed in June 2017, and given to the Ministry to prepare for the implementation of the new financial year 2017/2018.

On the 2nd of September 2016, it was announced to the staff especially the partners the initiation of its programs to improve compliance with the provisions of the Act, compliance improvement plan for 2 years. On the 1st July 2016 to the 30th June 2018 but was completed on the 31st December 2018.

These long-term plans were created from risks, seriousness and important challenges, and confirmed from the research and the opinions expressed by the people who pay taxes and duties, which obstructs and affects the compliance with the provisions of the Act, for the issuance of tax documents, duties and payment of taxes, and duties at the time limit set in the Legislation. This program has a large contribution in the work implemented by the Ministry, because our Government has a shortage of equipment and personnel. We have limited funds and time to do all the things we want to do. But with this program has made it possible to give priority and importance to these challenges, to reduce and remove them, for improvement and simplifying ways for our partners to comply with the provisions of the Acts. The implementation of the services of the Ministry is clear. In order to quickly, correctly and effectively collect income at the scheduled times, quick clearance of people travelling and goods to be sent to Samoa, so that trade can be carried out quicker for the public. Especially the protection for the safety of our international borders from people, products, plants, drugs and crimes.

I believe that through this program you have witnessed many changes in the activities of the Ministry, especially the increase in the income that was collected within the 5 years of our association. Samoa was the first in the Pacific to build and implement this program, and it was put together by the consultant, tax consultant, and the IMF, as well as the assistance of the New Zealand Tax Office.

In October 2016, Samoa became one of the founding members of the International Revised Kyoto Convention. This is an important milestone that the Custom Office has achieved in its history. Because this agreement is a framework, an important blueprint for the projects of the Customs Office, since it has become a member of the world Customs Organization.

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Samoa has been able to achieve this important level, after the consideration and confirmation of the preparation of the documents on the good and complete guidelines of the policies especially the methods used in the implementation of the work, standard procedures. To ensure the work implemented by the Customs Officer is clear and consistent all the time especially for the understanding of its partners, with these methods used by the Customs Office.

In May 2017, the Ministry signed a training program through the Customs Office, capacity building for 5 years with the Customs Office of New Zealand, and its implementation will end in June 2022.

This program will help the New Zealand Customs Office to note the knowledge and skills of the staff. And be well prepared for the projects and respond to some of the challenges and changes in world trade. One important part of this aid is to enable Samoa to meet the conditions of some international agreements. Just like the Trade Facilitation Agreements, of the World Trade Organization. In addition to this, the continuation of the work to evaluate and improve the implementation of work, in order to meet the requirements of the international agreement of the Revise Kyoto Convention, of the World Customs Organization.

In addition to these training programs, the Customs Office of New Zealand also gifted us with minor tools, special tools to assist with the implementation of the work of our Office, like the First Defendant. There is no need to question the importance of these tools and trainings, because it increases the awareness and knowledge of the staff on ways to monitor and prevent the importation of things into Samoa that affects the lives of our citizens.

It was recorded in the work of the customs department that 4 packages were found of goods and drugs in this financial year 2016/2017. These prohibited goods include equipment used for illegal narcotics, furthermore some illegal drugs like ice were found at the Fagalii airport.

In July 2017 to June 2018, \$521.6 million in revenue was estimated to be collected by the Ministry in that financial year. But only \$507.6 million was collected, which saw a deficit of \$14 million in revenue, with only 97% collected. \$329.4 million was collected by the Customs Office, but \$178.2 million was collected by the Revenue Office. Although the Ministry did not achieve the total amount of income that was planned, we still felt grateful to the Lord, because this income is more than the previous year 2016/2017 and other previous years. And it is a confirmation that the efforts of the Management and the staff are still improving to perform with a capacity and strength to collect our income, but the Praise is for our Lord.

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Despite the challenges due to the changes in the Act, especially the delay in implementing them, and the requirements of these changes, which were passed in the year 2016/2017, that resulted in putting up the Estimated Revenue for the financial year.

But the spirit of gratitude is conveyed to our business partners and all the taxpayers for their important and magnified contribution that was given this year, through your taxes and duties collected by the Ministry for the development of our Government, and the well-being and happiness of all our citizens. I commend you all on your efforts for good things. Thank you for your support. I commend your hard work.

Acts and the amendments made on Acts approved, the Act for Investment Tax Credit which ended on June 30th, 2018, to encourage the construction of good and attractive Five Star hotels for tourists. This Act started from 2003 for 5 years, in 2007 another 5 years was added, and in 2008 another 5 years was added. From 2013 to 2017, and then it ended on the 30th of June 2018.

The Government believes the objective of this Act has been achieved, to encourage the establishment of good and beautiful hotels. Like the Taumeasina Hotel, Aggie Grey Hotel Mulinuu, Sheraton Hotel, Tanoa Hotel, Lava Hotel, Return to Paradise and others, for our tourists, as well as providing employment for our people.

This Act for Investment Tax Credit, which started from 2003 until 2018 the 30th June, the Revenue Office was unable to collect \$113.2 million. And on that day, the 30th of June 2018, \$80 million has been used, with only \$33.2 million remaining, and it should be used up before 2023 on the last day of June.

If by that time it has not been used, these funds are paid back through taxes. This is a large sum of money, but if our people were to get good jobs, to work and pay taxes, maybe this is the essence by which the Government initiated this relief for hotels and tourists. The Government has given a lot of aid to tourism; thus, it ended in 2018.

In the Ministry's efforts to promote the Government's goal of using renewable energy, it was for this reason that consideration was conducted, and the excise tax was reduced from 20% to 5%, for electric powered vehicles, electric cars, as well as cars with 2 power hybrids that balances the usage of fuel and electricity. This relief was carried out, but the vehicles have yet to arrive, but it has been a year since it was carried out. It is believed that it will soon arrive. In this period in our country, there is a plethora of cars, too many cars, but I believe the reason for acquiring cheap trucks, is to be used for agriculture.

But at this time, there are only SUVs, SUVs, SUVs, well, the Ministry will look for other methods for adjustments to be made, so that the purpose for bringing these vehicles can be carried out.

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Not only are we evaluating the cars, but we will also re-evaluate and increase the tax rate, and excise for cigarettes and alcohol. The expectation is that this plan can be helpful to the work of the Ministry of Health. The tax for capital gains was reconsidered after identifying some contradictions upon its implementation and another related Act, stamp duty orders which is managed by the Ministry of Finance. Therefore, this stamp is required for registered land, to be brought under the Ministry of Customs, so that the Ministry of Customs can acquire all the land sold in Samoa, so that the Tax Credit can be used, the Capital Gain, since we do not know any land for sale, because it is registered under the MNRE, the stamp duty is done by the Finance Office, while we do nothing even though it is our Act. Now I have already made a request to the Minister to give it to us, so that we can acquire the purchase of land that is being done here.

In September 2017, the Ministry through the Tax Office hosted the conference for Heads of Administration Tax Offices of the Pacific, Pacific Island Tax Administration Association, PITA or PITAA. There are 16 countries in the Pacific that are members of this Organizations and about 50 of them travelled to Samoa to participate in this conference which include the partners of PITAA.

There was an increase in criminal cases noted, as non-compliance was discovered by the investigators, audit investigators of the Ministry, especially the joint team of Customs and Police, with the usage of sniffer dogs, K9 Joints Operation, and the punishment was given as about 30 cases were discovered from the border services which used K9s and they were handed over to the Ministry of Police for the continuation of our investigation and prosecution under our Laws. I implore the Hon Minister of Finance, since we really need these canines, two to be exact.

The Customs and Revenue Offices carried out 2 Joint Audit Investigation in this financial year, and additional funds of \$2 million were obtained, and have been paid accordingly. The initiation of this work was due to the efficiency of the staff, as they were able to use other methods and skills that were taught in many of our training and assistance programs, as well as the improvement of special skills, that have been obtained by the staff.

In monitoring of our international borders, 5 cargos and shipments were stopped by the Ministry, because they discovered equipment that is used for illegal drugs, and two of these shipments contained illegal drugs, such as marijuana and ice.

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In the financial year 2018/2019, a total of \$530.2 million was planned for the Fiscal Year but the Ministry collected \$551.6 million, and it was recorded a surplus of \$21.4 million or 104.3% was collected. 63.6% was collected by the Customs Office but the Revenue Office collected 0.9% from income and licenses for other services.

The total amount of increase in our revenue, and the surplus collected, if compared to the estimate income to be collected for each year and the previous years, as stated in an opinion under the Ministry's testimony and trademarks in the major changes made, it was carried out and readjusted focusing on the modern changes and different methods, to increase and improve compliance with the Acts, by our tax paying partners, through the implementation of their roles. The filing and payment of taxes, and duties should be done within the time limit as legally approved for the payment of taxes and duties.

The Acts and the changes to the Acts as passed. In June 2019, the Parliament approved the changes to the Customs Tariff Act for the usage of computerized methods 2017, Harmonized System, to replace the 2012 method for the Tariff Book of goods. This method is used by all the members of the World Customs Organization, including Samoa. This method system is updated every 5 years, due to the changes in the process of world trade, along with the introduction of some new products in the world trade, in order to gain new lines for new products, whereby some lines will be adjusted while the information of other lines will be changed to make it clearer.

Amendments for the Customs Tariff Act was verified and approved on the basis of produced goods 2019, to reduce the excise tax for alcohol like spirits. Amendments of Acts for Business Licensing 2018 to reflect the proposed business license fees. There were also amendments to the Film Regulations 2018 with Special Regulations for the Landing Limited Company in regard to the television series the South African Survivor.

Order from the Customs Office cancelling the 300% duty, and tax imposed on turkey tail products, to be imported into Samoa and subject to 20% duty, 10% excise tax and 15% VAGST that we have now.

Since its approval in the month of June 2017 of the Financial Year 2016/2017 it has only come into effect on the 1st January 2018, the changes to the Income Tax Act, imposed taxes on the income of the clergy, Le Ao o le Malo together with the lowering of income tax rates. In that same financial year, the Cabinet passed an Amendment to the Customs and Prohibited Goods Order to change the age limit for cars imported into Samoa from 8 years to 10 years old.

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In addition to this, it also confirmed the use of appropriate Ministerial decision, to permit the importation of cars for our citizens who worked and lived temporarily in foreign countries, as well as steadily allowing opportunities for the importation of their left-hand drive vehicles of small vehicles for use by individuals.

This Act is used by our families who are working abroad, especially our families in New Zealand, Australia and wherever they may be, as it will make it possible for them to import their cars that they have been using for more than 10 years but ensure that the vehicles are in their possession within 2 years before it can be imported.

In July 2019, the Cabinet approved an appeal to change the name of the Ministry from the Ministry of Revenue, to the Ministry of Customs and Revenue, to showcase the full scope of work and responsibilities implemented by the Ministry. By adding the word Customs into the name of the Ministry, it will make it easier for our international partners to understand the integration of these 2 services, and to receive the work and support training for the Ministry.

In order to improve the skills of the Leaders of the Ministries, the training for future Leaders was carried out this year and the New Zealand Government funded this program called the Pacific Leadership Program, the training was conducted not only for the Leaders of the Customs Office but also for other Ministries, and a total of 15 men and women from the Ministry of Police, Ministry of Prime Minister and the Cabinet, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Tokelauan Office, and the Ministry of Customs and Revenue were trained and successfully completed the training, also receiving Certificates from this training.

In order to promote cooperation between the Ministries as a whole and Private Businesses, an MOU was signed between the Ministry and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce Industry in this financial year.

This agreement is aimed at the sharing of information and the eagerness, for the Ministry to offer assistance, to encourage all the businesses registered to this Organization, to comply with the Acts and its policies, and facilitate the discussions and clarifications of the changes to these Acts and policies for the information of all businesses.

The Financial Year of July 2019/2020. The revenue collected is \$527.7 million of the projected revenue for the fiscal year. But the Ministry collected \$551.3 million and recorded a surplus of \$23.6 million, about 104.5% collected. 65.4 was collected by the Customs Office, 34.2 collected by the Revenue Office, and 0.14% was collected from revenue for licenses and other services.

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If compared to the previous fiscal year, there is a 1% decrease in the revenue collected near the end of June 2019. The estimated fund that was planned to be collected and passed by the Parliament is \$539.7 million.

But because of the economic impact of the measles outbreak in October, December 2019 followed by the Emergency Order restrictions, and the impact of the Covid-19 at the beginning of 2020, it caused us to make readjustments, reducing the Estimated Revenue, to be collected by the Ministry to \$527.7 million.

Despite these challenges and problems, the efforts of the Ministry were great, as it collected 104.5% of the Estimated Revenue planned to be collected within this Financial Year. This income surplus was achieved due to the determination and hard work of the staff together with the progress of compliance of our business partners with the requirements of the Acts, despite the serious impact of Covid-19.

Law on amendments made to the Legislations passed, the Amendment of the Act for the administration of taxes was passed, allows the Minister to request necessary records for taxes and duties deferred for the implementation of his duties. The Tax Administration Amendment Act 2019 encouraged the development of Private Businesses to increase the ability to improve production of goods. Income Tax Amendment Bill, Tourism Development, and goods produced in 2010. This amendment is an attempt to broaden the responsibility of those qualified for this assistance, for the development of Agriculture and Fisheries. The Tax Administration Amendment Act 2019, this Amendment was carried out, in order to insert Section 22A, of the Customs Act 2014, in accordance with the agreement signed between Samoa and PACER PLUS.

Order of Duty Rules of Origin for PACER PLUS 2019. This change was made in order to include the Section 3 of the Order of Duties which was officially established for the agreement of PACER PLUS. This Law of PACER PLUS, according to the analysis conducted by IMF, it will generate \$35 million in revenue after 25 years of operation...if after 25 years and we do not earn that exact amount. This seems like a large amount of money.... but if compared to the revenue we earn from the scheme for our workers, we earn \$210 million a year. If the GST is paid when they make purchases here in our country, it will add up to \$31 million which is still not balanced...

Orders amended to prohibit imported goods like corned beef and tinned fish, number 1 2020. For these changes the number of corned beef and tinned fish in the box was revised. The traders really despised us for this. Orders amended to prohibit imported goods, such as corned beef and tinned fish, number 2 2020.

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This order prohibits the importation of corned beef, 4 3lb cans per box, except for boxes that contain only 2 cans per box. It is the same for the box of tinned fish that has 12 tins per box, except boxes containing only 8 or 6 tins.

These amendments are the Government's response conveyed through the Ministry to ease the burden for families in times of important family matters, due to the constant increase in the cost of these canned goods. The aim of the Government is to make it easier and cheaper to obtain these goods, since it will always be needed by our citizens in times of these family occasions.

In the month of August 2019, the Ministry officially started using the 2017 edition of the Tariff Book and the 2012 edition which was passed in June 2019. There were many changes to this HS 2017 edition. Not only for the classification of goods, but also a detailed consideration by the Ministry, on the price of the duty and taxes for imported goods. All tariffs were changed that year.

In this Financial Year it was recorded that the Asian Development Bank funded the purchase of a container x-ray for the Ministry. Discussions were carried out with the ADB in regard to the wharfs and the town area, together with the Ministry of Finance for this purpose. Since the end of 2016, the progress of this work started, and it is planned to be completed this year 2021. This machine will be very helpful for the Customs Office for the inspection of containers of goods imported into Samoa, so that it can be checked quickly by the x-ray and find out if there are hidden goods like weapons or illegal drugs, because currently the work is carried out for inspections and investigations by the staff every day.

Not only does it take a long time to carry out, but there is a good chance that the staff might overlook and not find any weapons or illegal substances hidden in the containers, because the lawbreakers are very smart at smuggling and carrying out these methods. We pray that this machine arrives quickly sometime this year.

In October 2019, a Contract was signed with the IT Company from Serbia, Data Technology International, for the establishment of the program called TIMS, this is frowned upon. The Tax Invoice Monitoring System...

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, since you have used that word, I believe this is a chance to have a rest, but I call on the Leader of the House.

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Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: I have noticed that the Minister is out of breath, I was worried as someone needed to take the floor so the Minister can rest. But there is an area that I believe should be prioritized. This is the authority of the Customs Office, which was utilized by our Government, so that we can initiate the relief given, for our country as the leadership has failed not only the Church, but also with villages to ease the burden. And so, the price for a box of tinned fish has dropped to \$48 from the \$100 per box at that time. The number of cans in the box was reduced to 24, reduced again to 12, and now it is 6 cans per box, am I right? Now we have 6 cans per box, and we also decreased the price of the corned beef.

This is the legal authority that was used. The importance of this issue, Mr Speaker, as it is now being considered, these are the only sources of funds used to manage this Government, taxes and duties. Taxes and duties, that is all. This is what our Government depends on. But what makes this important, it almost started a war within the country in 1981. There were strikes as the Government employees protested, since their salaries have not been increased for a long time. But the solution used at that time, if a Samoan was hungry; they would then crawl on their stomach and knees that was the solution.

But this weapon will be strengthened, to be from the stomachs of hungry people who pray for the Government, and that will be the end of it, they return to carry out their usual work. The Government did not agree to raise their wages. Why? Because it is problematic since the Government did not want to raise the taxes at that time. The only thing that is being funded by this is the management of the Government, but the Government was hesitant because the Election was near.

In the end, the Government took action using another method; this was the Government before the HRPP, to dismiss all the employees that participated in the protest, meaning thousands of employees were terminated from work. This matter was then taken to Court, and the Court ruling stated it as illegal and unconstitutional. The actions taken by the Government were not compatible with the Constitution, and the people returned to work. Then a Committee was established to evaluate the taxes and to increase it to collect the money for the people's wages. I am stating this fact, because this is how the HRPP were able to enter the Parliament. The people had enough. The only thing left is finding a solution to fix the problem faced by our country. So this is an important aspect for any Administration, as this is the only thing that is helping the Government, taxes and tariffs. If another person comes and says, remove the taxes, then that is unacceptable.

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Because this is the main source with which the life of the Government is dependent on, as well as the life of the various Ministries and the lives of the public waiting in the rural areas. What are they waiting for? They are waiting for the assistance that the Government should provide.

Then 7 years later, another disaster occurred. Why? The HRPP Government had taken action in looking at readjusting the VAGST tax. This is important because this has caused the downfall of another political party in Australia, since it was unaccepted. The message that they conveyed was that once they enter the Government, they will setup and establish the VAGST. The tax is what the Government is dependent on. And for taxes, it cannot be obstructed by any country, since this is what operates the Government, it cannot be obstructed. There is no organization that hold meetings to oppose taxes. Why would they oppose if the Government is dependent on it? Mr Speaker, then in 1987 the United Nations created the VAGST. It was a very good Law in 1987. In 1988 the HRPP emerged again, the HRPP had an idea to broaden the VAGST Law, so not only was it limited to hotels, but it will also include other goods and services.

Therefore, the Act was brought back for amendments, whereby this VAGST tax was included on a variety of goods. During the administration of the Government before, it was only for hotels. But now it will be extended to also include goods and services. That Legislation was brought here in 1993. But something happened; now this Tax Act was brought, but it was the beginning of the month of September 1993, and the taro leaf blight emerged. The Opposition Party took advantage of the situation, the taro which our country depended on was affected, together with the VAGST that was passed. It resulted in 2 protest marches. First, it was the protest march by the Catholic Church, and the reason for this protest whereby they wore all white clothing, as it was the efforts of the Catholic Church Leaders to avoid the possibility of the country being affected by uncivilized behaviors that might start conflict. This was named by the Leader of the Catholic Church, the message of peace. And they also informed the Leader of the Government to not worry, as this was a protest to stop any problematic situations that might transpire.

This protest ended, but another protest march emerged, whereby they would go round to the families of Samoa, Tumua and Puleono in Salafai, and they would entice them to join the protest. It was dreadful, because this is what you call treason, a rebellion. So now they have come, since this protest march was rallied by the Opposition Party, but who are the members that are sitting in Parliament?

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The Aiga, as well as Tumua and Puleono of Salafai under the Constitution, these are the representatives of Aiga and Tumua and Puleono in Salafai, but now the Opposition Party have enticed the Aiga and Tumua and Puleono to come and protest. This is called treason; it is a rebellion. However, even after all these things, the Leader of the Government and us the members were steadfast.

When this protest by Tumua and Puleono in 1994 occurred, a large number of protesters marched in front of the Government building, where they build tents and performed dances and made condescending remarks to insult the Government. We had a meeting on the top floor of the building, as our Leader called for the council to give our opinions, and there was a suggestion made to call on our constituencies to counteract to this situation. This is going to be war. The speeches progressed and then a member made a statement, “Honourable Tootooalii, let us be patient, the Government is being tested. If we do this, the country will be at war.

Because if the constituencies of the members that form the Government were to come, they would not only come with their bare hands, but they would bring weapons. Then a statement was made, that we should leave it to the Lord, for the Lord will resolve it, together with words from the Bible, if God is with us, who then dares go against us. As these words were being uttered, outside of the building, only obscene words and statements can be heard, and the Leader of the Opposition Party also made a speech, while pointing at the buildings, who is going to eat these buildings, who is going to eat these planes? Those are the words that I heard a few months ago being uttered again.

Mr Speaker, this was the conclusion we agreed upon, to keep the peace. We adjourned and dispersed, but luckily, we did not know that the village of one of our members were on their way, as there were 6 buses filled with village members and untitled men with weapons. If those buses had made it through, our citizens who were protesting would have been severely injured. Mr Speaker, the swift action taken by the police stopped it.

Mr Speaker, this is a very important matter. Once the Parliament passes its Legislations in all the countries of the world, not a single voice will be raised, how come? They all understand, when it comes to taxes, it is the lifeline of a country. These taxes allow us to implement the good work for schools, hospitals, things that our country desires. It is why, I pity anyone who would interfere with this, especially when they try to sway our people. When a problem occurs, who will we turn to?

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Mr Speaker, I wanted to go back to this period because that was when the protest marches began. There were a series of protests in 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1998. These protests have been going on for 5 years. The only thing is to stand firm and leave it to God. What was the result? It did not end well for the conspirators. An important message for all of us, if a person interferes with this matter, then they are playing with fire. The act of rallying people to protest against the Laws made by the...that has been passed by the members of Parliament. Representatives of who? *Aiga ma latou Tama faapea Tumua ma Puleono I Salafai*. This is the country here. But for others to go and instigate protest marches, and then come hoping to reduce the taxes, they are playing with fire.

Mr Speaker, that is the importance of this statement, to remind us, when we move forward, take a look back to see where this country is heading, because the events of the past, may occur again, and the Government should act quickly to prevent any troubles that may arise.

Mr Speaker, well, this is enough assistance given, and the member has rested enough. Well, you can continue.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I commend the Hon Prime Minister, the Leader of the Government as well as the Leader of the House. I beseech the member, as the House will proceed to express its gratitude for the wonderful speech while the country is listening. Is there an important issue that the member would like to address?

Afioga Salausa John Ah Ching: The matter addressed by the Hon Minister was stated in my speech due to the needs of the constituency. Thank you for the opportunity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: You make your own opportunity. I am still thinking, because in our Standing Orders a request is made, then the Chair has to consider whether it is appropriate through official terms and then the member is allowed to stand and speak.

Afioga Salausa John Ah Ching: Well, this is my humble request Mr Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: But I will concede your request and do what you want, all the best. It is very hard to not convey mutual respect as it is our culture and traditions.

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Afioga Salausa John Ah Ching: Thank you very much for your respect. Thank you also to the Hon Minister as you should have a rest. But I was carefully listening to the presentation of the income and the whole time, my mind went to my speech on the needs of my constituency regarding roads. And for this constituency as I have already stated, these are the only needs of Faleata No.1, the roads. The community access roads, since there are barely any access roads that lead to the plantations, but the community access roads are used to travel to Apia for work. And this is the revenue with which we depend on for the construction of these roads. Because the only funds that are being used for the construction of the main road which goes all the way to Faleolo, are the funds provided by the World Bank.

But for the access roads that lead to the plantations, the community roads of Faleata No.1, the funds needed are acquired from this income. This is why I am grateful to hear that there is a constant increase in our revenue, because the needs of the constituency and its development are dependent on these taxes and revenues for its implementation. That is all, thank you for the opportunity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you to the member for Faleata No.1. The statement made is correct, because I remember we attended the opening of your new road coming from Lepea going towards Vaitoloa, and you stated that it was an access road. Well, the statement is correct, as the distance is similar to that, so it is not in the vicinity of the community, but it leads into the zone where the people of the constituency reside. But thank you.

Afioga Salausa John Ah Ching: Mr Speaker, the community access roads that I stated in my speech is for this constituency of Faleata No.1, which is where some members of Parliament reside, it also residence to CEOs, Government employees and many of the employees within Apia. This is the workforce residing here. So, these road works are for the improvement of our access roads which we use to come to work. That is why this revenue is important. The only thing that the Hon Minister of Finance is waiting for is the dividing of the wages, or the division of the development budget, so that it can be distributed based on the total population of a constituency. That is all, thank you for the opportunity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, now the context has been made clear, since the House is laughing and pondering on the meaning of the statement made by the respectable member but thank you. The opportunity will be given to the member for Palauli le Falefa.

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Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga: Thank you Mr Speaker, no, the speech of the Hon Prime Minister regarding our income from the taxes of our country is clear and fully understood. In regard to our foreign partners, the funds they provided to help with our development programs are from their taxes collected. So now they are observing the things we do, whether the developments are being implemented or not. Furthermore, the funds that we are also receiving from the World Bank, ADB and our other partners, is the tax money that is being paid by the people of their countries. Therefore, these funds are provided on the conditions based on our policies for acquiring funds for the development of Samoa. Mr Speaker, I am knowledgeable in this matter, because I have worked in International Organizations for a long time, so I understand this matter completely.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa: Mr Speaker I request for an opportunity.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I beseech the member who is upstanding. Is it an interruption or speech...

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa: It is a Point of clarification...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may stand and make your statement.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa: This member does not want to interrupt the wonderful statement of the Minister. Since I am also one of the members that fully support the speech of this Minister because he is compassionate about the Ministry and where he worked. As for the statement made by the Leader tonight, this member would like to understand the wonderful speech of the Leader that has concluded recently. He stated that 6 buses transported the villagers. And so, I would like to know, which constituencies did these buses come from, that came to drive out the people of the country here. That is the only clarification by this member.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, perhaps... when the police arrived all of the people were already loaded on the buses to come. And then they had a meeting to put an end to this, but all I can say is, it is one of the constituencies on the east side of Upolu, that is all.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER: I believe the member is satisfied. You already know yet you still asked. Well, this is not a problem.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa: Mr Speaker, because I want Samoa to hear it, as these children and these lands are owned by a Vaimauga. But since the member for Faleata is constantly stating that it is their land. That is what I wanted, for the Leader to say, the name of the constituency whereby the owners of this land are from. With respect.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Government has spoken in regard to the question of the member. And the Chair is satisfied. This is why you do not mess with Faleata.

Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi: Mr Speaker, no, maybe the constituency only wanted to ride the bus. We were also prepared, since we also wanted to ride the bus. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I believe that there is nothing more to say, regarding the wonderful speech, but also the statement by the Leader of the Government, everything is satisfactory. Now the country has heard the important values for public well-being so that the country can prosper, in all its aspects.

Therefore, we will no longer address this matter, as all the circumstances have been made clear in the speech of the Hon Leader of the House. On the essence of the speech of the Minister of Customs and Revenue.

I call on the Hon Minister, I believe you do not have long to go, but continue your speech.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Thank you Mr Speaker, perhaps I have one more hour left. In addition to these 5 years, the revenue from VAGST is \$205 million in 2015/2016, \$210 million in 2016/2017, \$220 million in 2017/2018, \$230 million in 2018/2019, \$239 million is the revenue earned from VAGST of taxes of the Customs Office.

This IT for Data Technology International, is to create a program called TIMS, Tax Invoice Monitoring System. This program, since I took over in 2016, every time we have meetings with the Chamber of Commerce they would always complain. The taxes paid by businesses are not the same. There are businesses that pay taxes, and there are also businesses that do not pay taxes at all.

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Mr Speaker, this program was obtained from a faraway place. This is the only program that allows for all businesses to be equal in collecting taxes, the time you make a purchase, the total of your purchase is automatically sent to the Tax Office. And the reason for its implementation is because of the complaint that was given, whereby the collection of business taxes is not done equally. There are businesses that do not pay taxes. When the Cabinet accepted the request of the Ministry, a program that monitors the income and taxes of all the businesses was registered in the Ministry. It is not a tax or a new duty to be paid, but it is just a program so that it can be obtained by the Ministry. Make quick, clear and accurate records at the time of the transaction and then they will be able to conduct their work. Checking and examining the tax forms submitted by the business owners on a daily or monthly basis. And then legal action is taken if there are any major and serious differences. It was implemented at the end of October until the end of January 2020, an example of this program, a trial period. In one of the companies that offered their assistance, to the Ministry for the usage of their company for the trial.

And I would like to express a special thanks to this company, CCK Samoa Limited. For its foresight, its important assistance, and especially its trust in the Ministry's long-term plan for this program. Not only does it help to equalize and to balance the tax payments by all business owners. In February 2020, the Act for the administration of taxes, electronic methods 2020 was passed, and TIMS was officially opened on March 4th, 2020, and the preparations for the establishment of some courses of action, and tax information on the Regulation.

We have now started the registration process of 5 groups, divided into business owners, registration for taxes. The classification process of this program is sequential, because of the desire so that it is utilized by the business owners. This program is in accordance with the conditions of the Act. Trainings and seminars were conducted within the last months of this financial year, for those who have been appointed for the first phase for the initiation of the TIMS on the first day of July 2020. However, since many requested for additional time for their preparations, because many of the businesses have been affected due to the impact of Covid-19. Therefore, the starting time for each group was changed and given on January 1st, 2021, to officially start the program. At this moment it has started.

Within the last 6 months of this financial year, this time was used to implement the training of the staff for investigations on some problems, which will be recognized and revealed. It was possible to issue an amendment to the duty rate for electric vehicles, to be exempted from duties and taxes for 2 years. As of now, 5% has been removed, but all electric cars are duty free.

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So that taxes and duties are exempted for 2 years, to encourage businesses and the citizens of the country, with the importation of these types of cars into our country. In order to reduce the impacts on our environment. With the continuous use of motor vehicles that use oil and petrol.

In the month of February of the year 2020, the Ministry provided the equipment, through the assistance of the New Zealand Customs Office. These tools are very important for the monitoring of illegal drugs and goods. The Ministry together with the Ministry of Police signed an agreement with the Pacific Canine Unit, regarding the development of our sniffer dogs. As well as the skills of our staff who carry out this work. There are also plans in this agreement, for the inclusion of tools for the sniffer dogs for the implementation of its work. The only issue is the delay, because it was needed at this time, the dogs that were needed last year, but now it is 2021. When Samoa signed the Revised Kyoto Convention, and the Tracey Casing Agreement. One of the developments that were initiated in the month of January 2020 is the program called the Authorize Economic Operators. This program is an important part in recognizing companies and businesses that have a high level of compliance with the Acts and policies of the Ministry.

A number of 5 large companies have already been included in this program, and it is now being extended to other major companies, so all the businesses in Samoa are taken into account. For the work of understanding and developing the skills of the staff. There were three male and female officers, who graduated in a program of the Customs Office of New Zealand, and they are now introductory teachers for the Customs Office of the Ministry.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I interrupt the speech of the Hon Minister of Customs and Revenue. Congratulations for the speech, since we have come to the adjournment time for the work of Parliament this evening. But before we adjourn, I call on the Hon Leader of the House for a motion, for the Legislations of our work.

MOTION TO CONTINUE AND CHANGE SITTING HOURS

Susuga Hon TUILAEP AUELUA FATIALOFA LUPESOLIAI LOLOFIETELE NEIOTI AIONO GALUMALEMANA Dr. SAILELE MALIELEGAOI: Mr Speaker, due to desire to complete the responses of the Ministers of Cabinet as soon as possible and the goal for our work to be completed on Tuesday of next week.

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I move the motion for the changing of Assembly hours as follows, *For Parliament to convene tomorrow, Saturday 27th February at 2:00pm until 7:00pm.*

The second part of the motion is the reinstatement of Sitting Hours of the Legislative Assembly on Monday 1st March 2020 as per the motion that was previously approved by the House in the beginning of this week.

And the third motion, for the Minister's speech to be continued, since I can see that he has one more page left for another 3 minutes to finish it off, and then we can adjourn for this evening.

This is the motion for the approval of the House.

Seconded by the Minister of Women, Community and Social Development and the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labor.

Motion approved.

Debates continued with the Government Responses on the second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude your speech Hon Minister, do not...

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Thank you for the motion for an extra 30 minutes, thank you for the respect.

The activities of the Board of Directors for alcohol control, as there is no lack of awareness on the growing effects and complaints of the public on some alcohol products that are produced in Samoa. This is the reason for some of the changes that were discussed and passed by the Board of Directors as a response with the major changes in the 750mls bottle going forward. This also includes the changing of the glass bottles we have now into plastic bottles.

These changes are expected to come into effect in the month of July 2021. The Board of Directors together with the Health Office also carried out investigations and inspections to alcohol factories. To ensure the safety and integrity of the process of producing this strong alcohol for the consumption of the country.

The Financial Year of July to August 2020, 6 months and the Financial Year has reduced the \$475.4 million revenue planned to be collected and it has decreased more than the revenue planned for last year. And there is no need to guess or to reiterate the reasons for the reduction of these long-term plans, due to the impact of Covid-19.

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From the month of July until the end of December 30th, 2020, the Ministry was able to collect an income of \$258.2 million, so a surplus of \$37 million in 6 months. I pray that the hard work and persistence of the Management and the staff is maintained, to collect 46% income that is planned to be collected in the last half of this financial year.

Well, most of the other issues here will be set aside, but I believe that...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, move on to the last paper and finish off your speech.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Mr Speaker, I will now try to explain the collection of taxes and duties of the businesses collected by the Ministry, the outstanding debts. For 2015/2016 \$11.2 million was collected, the RS Customs was \$20 million...\$32 million was collected in debt. For 2016/2017, \$31.3 million was collected. 2017/2018 it was \$33.7 million, \$38.2 million for 2018/2019, and \$35.4 million for 2019/2020. A total of \$174.3 million was collected.

The outstanding debts of taxes and duties are not hidden, as they have been noted in the records of the Ministry and are thus collected in each fiscal year, along with the taxes and duties that must be paid for in each period.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa (Vaimauga East): Mr Speaker, I request for an opportunity....

DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is just a few more paragraphs left, I implore the member, it is almost...

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa: I would like to take the floor to offer my assistance.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is only the conclusion left.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa: Yes this is the reason why I am upstanding. If the Hon Minister has more pages left, give it out to members to take home and read, then we will come back tomorrow. Because I have noticed that he still have alot more left prepared. Mr Speaker this is the reason for taking the floor.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, that is a good suggestion, but I ask the Minister to conclude because...

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Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: It only makes me want to finish this speech more...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Well, you are a senior member, continue your speech.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: The amount of funds collected in 5 years by the Ministry of Customs and Revenue, is \$2 billion, \$97.1 million, which was collected by the Ministry in the past 5 years.

Mr Speaker, I should be given an opportunity, since the circumstances I am in is difficult, because the constituency I represented in the other Parliamentary Term has been changed...

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister you may speak, since your pinion is important.

Afioga Hon TIALAVEA FEA LENIU TIONISIO HUNT: Before I continue with my speech, I am speaking as an orator. Thus, I touch upon the honorary salutations of Government. But first I would like to acknowledge the honorifics of Kings from this historical land and acknowledge my beloved constituency of Anoamaa No.1 listening in. Because now ties have been broken, and now the sailor of the sea is afraid.

I take this golden opportunity to convey salutations to my constituency of Anoamaa starting from Lufilufi the respects of *Toaono, ma le Saofaiga Tupai ma le Afio o Seutaatia, ma le mamalu ia te oe le Tumua*. Those are your respects Lufilufi from the beginning until eternity. As for our work, we will continue our work to make requests for our access roads.

My village of Manunu. *Afio mai Tapunuu o Leafa ma Maugatai, Afio foi Fale o Salevalasi, Ili ma Togafau ma Tupuola, Susu mai oulua o Matua o Tai ma Fonotia, Susu mai oulua Tala o le Fale Logonai ma Aumua, susu mai Faifaimea o le tagata o le Tuiatua, Susu mai Lufilufi ma le saofaiga*. Well, I assure you that we will try to construct a road before the election takes place.

My village of Lalomauga, *Afio mai Aiga, Afoa ma le matua o Lefao, maliu mai oulua o Ti ma Tagata, Susu mai lo outou Toaono ma le Vainalepa, Susu mai Lufilufi ma le Saofaiga*, I am aware that our roads are damaged, especially the ford across the river. Perhaps if I were to return in the next Parliamentary term, repairs will continue.

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Saleapaga. *Afio mai Lealaisalanoa o le Tei o Tupua, le Tama a Maliliefa, Afio mai le Falefa o ou alo ma Usoalii, Maliu mai le Matua o Iuli ma le Gautaala. Maliu Fuaava o le Laufaaua, ma le tupe na tanoaese ma le mamalu ia oe le Gautaala. Sagapolu. Afio mai Leutele o le Tina o Tupua, Afio mai le Taauso ma le Atuga o le tamaitai, Afio mai Aloalii, Maliu mai le Matua o Moeonoono, Maliu mai Alo ma le Aiga Sa Alo, Sa Fepulupuluainiu ma le nofoaga o alii.*

It is believed that our stream that borders Falefa and Faleapuna, is in need of a water barrier because our villages near Falefa is being affected by this stream especially at the backyard of Faleapuna.

Gagaemalae. *Afio mai Alaiasa na fitaituga na saili lou Faleatua i lou aao malosi, Afio mai Sanaeseese, Maliu mai lou nuu ma Leusoalii, Sanonu, Afio mai Suluvave o le Alo o Tuiavii, maliu mai le Matua Leuta ma le Aiga Sa Leuta, Pule na faafeagai, i le la itu o le vai, ma lenei itu o le vai. Maliu mai Fulumua o aitu tagata o Fonoti.*

Falevao. *Ia Afio mai Gaeolo ma le Suafa Neioti, Susu mai Ae o le Alo o Malietoa, maliu mai le Falelima o le Siitaga o Fita, ma tagata o le Tuiatua le aai o Fonoti.* There are a lot of projects facing our village, especially our water reservoir behind the school building, and the land for the establishment of our sports fields. The sports field for the School of Falefa has been completed and improved. Well, if the effort is successful, then these roads will be used for that sports field, and the reservoir behind the school building has also been inspected.

My village of Faleapuna. *Gafa ma le Aloasina ma Suafa, Fetalaiga Too o le Fua Molioo ma le Aiga Sa Molioo, o oe o le Ailaoa, ia aemaise Malepeai o le aitu o le nuu.* I take this opportunity to voice a humble state of mind; I am Tialavea Tionisio Hunt, a candidate for the upcoming election.

The sanctity of the constituency, a voice is raised with the utmost respect I implore our constituency, for your wise judgement and deep wisdom. I am eager to work, and I want to serve for the prosperity of the constituency, especially for our future generations. I have completed my services at Vaa o Fonoti, all the work at Vaa o Fonoti have all been completed, for the families, the constituency, the Churches, everything has been completed. And so I thought that I should also serve our constituency of Anoamaa No.1.

The sanctity of the constituency, I will not announce any projects for my constituency, as you will see it fit, whatever the outcome, with the foresight and prudence, with which you will accept the plea of this humble member, whatever is achievable, whatever knowledge I possess, and with all the strength I have, I will use it to carry out my services for my constituency. May the spirit of God assist you with your decision in the election.

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I conclude my speech by expressing my gratitude to the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Customs of Revenue, but first I will start with the Associate Minister Tofa Lenatai Tamapua. I commend your services and your patience and thank you for your recommendations during the time that we interacted within this Parliamentary Term.

To me, the Associate Minister did not have any faults. When I call for him to come, no matter the time, he would always stand up and approach me. I am also very lucky to have an Associate Minister who strongly supports every work that I implement. God bless your efforts for this upcoming Parliamentary Term, maybe in the next 5 years you will be standing here.

The lady Chief Executive Matafeo Avalisa Iuli, I commend your hard work and your services, I also commend the respect that you have shown to me and the Associate Minister. The work that you have diligently carried out, it is not for me or the Associate Minister, but it is for the general welfare of the country. You carried out your duties sensibly without fear of giving your recommendations. Fonoti Tupu as well as Ieni, the ACEO and the Deputy Commissioner of the Ministry, I applaud your services and your support given to the madam Chief Executive. The staff and the sanctity of the staff, thank you for your hard work in these 5 years, especially my friend the security guard. I arrive at the Office at 7 o'clock, and we would converse. Well, thank you for your hard work, from the CEO to the security guard, for your acknowledgement of the Associate Minister and myself, I wish you all the best. God bless the progress of moving forward.

Well, Associate Minister, pardon me Mr Speaker, thank you to the sanctity of the clergies of the various parishes within our constituency who are in support, especially the ordained servants of the constituency of Anoamaa. God bless your services and thank you also for your prayers for me and fellow member Alaiasa in this Parliamentary Term that is now ending. God bless our Assembly this evening. Goodbye.

Parliament expressed their happiness with applause after the response of the Minister for Customs and Revenue, Police, Prisons and Corrections.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The speech of the Hon Minister, you had stated that this evening was not easy for you. The Chair and this House also have a belief, as it not easy from our observation. How come? Well, it is already broadcasted on air, you have searched during the day and during the night. You do not sleep at all. You stood at the helm, for the success of the Government and the country that is listening.

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The House have heard, especially the audience of the country, in its many districts. They have heard the duties and responsibilities that were entrusted to the Hon Minister.

This is a summary starting from 2016 until this year. Therefore, I commend your services, thank you for serving the Government, and I appreciate your patriotism. Because our Government is dependent on your Ministry, as stated by the Leader of the Government. We are not trying to entice you, because everything has been clarified clearly in the speech of the Hon Minister. Well, the speech has now been concluded and all the aspects have been addressed. And we would just like to say, I salute your efforts, as the projects you have carried out are not minor, yet you persevered for its completion. You have conveyed your blessings to the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry, for their selfless services, for the benefit of our citizens.

God bless you on your endeavours in the upcoming election. Only God can make decisions on everything. May the goodness of God be with you all.

The dignity of the House, I salute your attendance this evening, I praise your determination, with the wealth of wisdom and prudence expressed today. So now, everything has been clarified, for issues that were obscure. I believe the circle is complete and everything has been clarified in your audience.

The sacredness of Samoa and your devotion, we turn to you to say, thank you very much. The Assembly of Parliament is successful because of your silent prayers. Thank you very much, and God bless your devotion.

Well, the Chief Executive Officers of the Ministries, especially the Ministry that gave its speech today. We will not say anything more, as nothing is concealed in the eyes of God.

May God bless the Leaders of the Ministries, especially those who serve as the hands and feet of the Government. Thank you for your patience, as we are able to complete our Assembly for this evening.

We have now come to the exact time for the adjournment of our work. But before we adjourn our work for this evening. I respectfully call on the member of Aleipata Itupa I Lalo, Afioga Tuiatua Faanofonofu, to say a pray to conclude our work for this evening. With all due respect.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly adjourned at 10:24pm until Saturday, 27th February 2021 at 2:00pm.